ENTERTAINMENT / G1
Psychotherapist tells why some celebrities revel in controversy

BUSINESS / B1
2% increase in oil tariff may raise diesel price by P0.50/liter

ACROSS / A20
Diarrhea downs 178 in flooded towns of Eastern Samar

WORLD / A25
Clinton slams Obama on health care plan: Shame on you

Edsa I rites today split people power

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, February 25, 2008 44 11 sections | Vol. 22 / No. 79 P18 www.inquirer.net

Another Edsa revolt? Business is divided

By Inquirer Business Staff

PEOPLE POWER RECALLED Yellow ribbons decorate MRT/LRT pole fences in front of the Edsa Shrine as part of preparations for today's celebration of the 1986 Edsa I uprising

Villar sees impeachment

GMA tells foes: I will finish my term in 2010

By Christine O. Avendaño

FRIEND SUPPORT President Macapagal-Arroyo is greeted by locals Imelda and former classmates after the exclusive celebration in Malacañang

New rap based on GMA admission of NBN flaw

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Christine O. Avendaño and TJ Burgonio

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S ADMISSION SHE ALLOWED the signing of the $329-million broadband deal with a Chinese firm despite knowing it was attended by corruption is a basis for filing another impeachment complaint against her, Senate President Manuel Villar said yesterday.

"If she signed it, there it's a ground for impeachment. That is wrong. Graft is an impeachable crime," said Villar, who was the Speaker who transmitted to the Senate the articles of impeachment against then President Joseph Estrada on Nov. 13, 2000, for retail.

Mr. Arroyo has survived three impeachment bids and at least three attempted coups in her seven years in power.

Villar said the earliest that an impeachment complaint could be filed against the President would be on July 27 (month of

A soldier's last testament lives on

By Ricio M. Jarque

(Editor's note: The author in this last of a series of articles on Cpl/Sgt Arroyo expose who delivered this speech before the Philippine Constitution Association shortly before he died on Aug. 31, 2005. It was edited slightly for brevity.)

THE COUNTRY IS IN POLITICAL TURMOIL once more. The legitimacy and moral authority of the Arroyo government are being questioned, echoing Jaime Cardinal Sin's proclamation before the 1986 Edsa People Power [revolt] that a government that wins an election by fraudulent means does not have the moral authority to govern.

EDSA 1: OUT OF THE BARRACKS
SPECIAL *Report*
Fernando del Mundo
(Ret.) Navy

One hopes democracy is to prevail again. The presidency is severely damaged and we have discordant voices on how it should be. Fiscal—impeachment, presidential powers, resignation, military takeover. The multitude sees a desperation to hold on to power. She has to because she knows she is guilty, along with the unscrupulous politicians, bureaucrats and generals around her.

This is an administration that neither cares for decency nor respects the truth. It is painfully clear that the days of state needs a new captain and the ship needs to alter course. The country needs to get out of the waters not just with new leaders but with a new rule set for governance and politics.

The history of many developing nations and even some people power history have shown that when civilian institu-

Stalemate benefits generals

By Antonio Quesada

THE 22ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1986 People Power revolution today finds the Philippines locked in yet another political impasse, lending credence to the perception that it is one of the most ingovernable nations

ANALYSIS

STORYTELLER Charlyn Chua reads to young orphans during the Inquirer's Read Along session at the Reception and Study Center for Children in Quezon City

Inquirer Read Along session special treat for 40 orphans

By Eliza Victoria
Inquirer Research

THE 25TH SESSION OF THE INQUIRER Daily Inquirer's Read Along program held yesterday at the Reception and Study Center for Children (RSCC) in Quezon City was a special treat for 40 orphans aged 2-5 years.

They were accompanied by 300 school volunteers from God's Special Children Inc.

The RSCC is an orphanage which looks after abandoned, abused and neglected children 6 years and under. The 42-year-old institution has a temporary shelter where parents in crisis can leave their children for a maximum of six months.

Children surrendered by their parents or declared abandoned by the court are put up for adoption.

The room where the session was held looked festive. It was decorated with brightly colored balloons and bunting.

Read-along Ahaipap storyteller Charlyn Chua, who was pleasantly surprised by the large number of attendees, read two stories: "Og Ulog" by Christine

Noah's Ark of food built in North Pole

LONGYEARBYEN, NORWAY—(UPI) At providing mankind with a Noah's Ark of food in the event of a global catastrophe, an ironic "doomsday vault" filled with samples of the world's most important seeds will be inaugurated here on Tuesday.

European Commissioner Presidente José Manuel Barroso and Nobel Peace

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

SUBMITRES

SUPERLOTTO 6/49

P82,502,967.60

Bishops call emergency meeting

Stand on crisis, communal action, new brand of people power on agenda

By Blanche S. Rivera
INQ Correspondent

THE INFLUENTIAL CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONference of the Philippines (CBCP) will hold a special plenary meeting tomorrow to discuss its position amid the rising calls for President Macapagal-Arroyo's ouster on corruption allegations.

The CBCP which holds its regular plenary session twice a year—in January and June—called for the special meeting last week because of differing interpretations of the CBCP president's call for "communal action," according to a source privy to the meeting.

The bishops are expected to thresh out exactly what CBCP president and Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo meant when he called for "communal action" and a "new brand of people power" in an interview aired over Church-run Radio Veritas.

One bishop, Boles Arigo of Puerto Princesa, has called for President Arroyo's resignation. Another, Antipolo's Nilo Tayag, called for the resignation of her Cabinet and the replacement of "evil" Ombos Mercile Marcelous Bishops, support President Arroyo anticipating her term.

Some in the lay sector have interpreted the calls to mean the bishops would spearhead street demonstrations or a people power revolt against Ms. Arroyo, similar to those that toppled Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada in 1986 and 2001, respectively.

Even Malacañang officials were asked differently by Lagdameo's statements, apparently because of differing interpretations as well.

"That is the various interpretations; it is only one reason. The other is the urgency of the political situation because of the snowballing campaign for [2000's naught] anonymity because we were one of papers submitted for discussion to the CBCP.

After the special session, there will be a meeting between the bishops and legislators on Feb. 27, the source said.

"We don't know yet. However, I don't know," the source said, referring to both meetings.

The CBCP held its first plenary session in 2007 in January.

WHERE LULI WENT

Army from the rescue her parents, President Macapagal-Arroyo and Jose Miguel Arroyo, find themselves embroiled in a Manila First Daughter Luli Arroyo shares a wave at another user's photo during Green Eco Philo, which cleans up shorelines, the Department of Tourism and the Surfers, Li Unites, municipal governments in showing up the town's coast which is the site of international surfing competitions.

Computer crimes rising, say police

By Alexis Pape

CRIMES COMMITTED VIA computers rose sharply last year, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said yesterday.

A briefing paper on cyber crimes by the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) said that 1,841 crimes involving computers were reported to police in 2007, almost triple the 527 crimes reported in 2006.

Overall, a total of 2,424 computer crimes were reported from 2003 to 2007. Those only 37 in 2003, the number rose to 527 in 2006, more than 14 times more in 2004. It surged to 161 in 2005.

Between 2004 and 2006, the PNP's cyber crime unit investigated 335 cases involving computer forensics.

The cyber crimes consist of among others, credit card fraud, cyber pornography, copyright infringement, and computer crimes defined as in Republic Act No. 8792 or the E-Commerce Act, and RA 8484 or the Access Devices Regulation Act.

CIDG commander Chief Supt. Raul Castañeda said they were going "full blast" against cyber crimes.

"We are really focusing on cyber crimes. We have to be prepared because this is the wave of the future," Castañeda told the INQUIRER.

The CIDG's efforts have resulted in the conviction in 2005 of Al Maria Cinco, the first conviction of a hacker in the country. Cinco was convicted under the E-Commerce Act for hacking into government websites.

The CIDG has also dubbed 21 "phishing" sites based in the country. Phishing is an attempt to fraudulently obtain sensitive information like user names, passwords and credit card details by passing oneself as a friendly and trustworthy through electronic communication.

Computer and cell phone forensics were also used in other cases like the one against members of the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA), the murder of Ozamiz City Mayor Jose Bravo and the cases against Magdalo officers, the Siniman Mati as well as other bombing incidents, and the Peninsula Manila siege.

Castañeda revealed that training and procurement of equipment was ongoing to beef up their capabilities in computer forensics and other crime investigation.

He noted that computer forensics as well as cell phone forensics were becoming vital in counterterrorism and anticriminality operations.

Castañeda said efforts to fight cyber crime were mostly concentrated in Metro Manila. But he said they would put up satellite units in Davao, Zamboanga, Cebu and Baguio cities.

At present, the CIDG's computer crimes unit only has nine operatives. But 200 CIDG personnel have received training in cyber crime investigation.

Most of the equipment being used by the CIDG came from the US Anti-Terrorism Assistance Program.

To boost its campaign against cyber crimes, the CIDG is forging closer ties with the National Bureau of Investigation, the Police Anti-Crime Emergency Response Service, Interpol, Philippine Intelligence, Coordinating Agency, Anti-Money Laundering Council and Microsoft.

The Philippines is also ramping up with other countries with cyber crime units like China, India, Indonesia, Bolivia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Japan/Hong Kong.

UN plan vs RP pollutants

THE UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL Development Organization (Unido) based in Vienna, Austria, will undertake a $9-million GEF (Global Environment Facility) project that aims to remove persistent organic pollutants (POPs) in the Philippines.

POPs are chemical substances that persist in the environment, bio-accumulate through the food web, and pose the risk of adverse effects to health and the environment.

The Unido project in cooperation with the Philippines is part of a global program to apply non-combustion technology to destroy obsolete POPs (pesticides) highly[illegible] wastes.

Cynthia O. Salazar

Kris' Facial Care Favorites

Kris says, "Facial Care is a worthwhile indulgence. Because feeling fit, my clientele or Facial Care are women who have reached a point in their lives where they can afford the best. Because they've worked hard to attain that. And Facial Care represents the best as far as technology is concerned, coupled with personalized service, and such a pleasant environment."

Kris' Top 3 Facial Care Favorites:

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All products[illegible] from the Regishtage line are made from the finest ingredients to preserve the skin's youthful tone and texture. Regishtage's 8-Layer Facial Treatment, hailed one of the best anti-aging facials of the century by Cosmopolitan UK, replenishes lost vitamins, minerals and moisture while stimulating muscle.

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Rains good for flowers, folk at Baguio's Panagbenga fest

By Inquirer
Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—Hit-or-miss downpours of the 12th Panagbenga Flower Festival did not bother the number 1/2 crowds, fussy them had luck.

Its rains no fun-dar drenched the floats and parties, gusts in the annual flower parade, local officials, organizers and especially the more than 300,000 residents and tourists who flocked here would not let the foul weather dampen their spirits.

Spectators filled the parade route along Session and Harrison Roads as early as 7 a.m., most of them carrying umbrellas or plastic sacks, wearing jackets and raincoats.

Colorful scenes

Mayor Reinaldo Bautista Jr. ordered the parade of floats to proceed as scheduled, and led the way by driving an electric jeepney carrying local officials.

The parade took nine hours, exhibiting colorful scenes that included the Ipo-Ipo Country club and fun food chain ChowKing.

The average float used fresh flowers worth P150,000 to P500,000, "making them expensive festival investments," said Benedicto dela Jr., city tourism officer.

Former Sarigan del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. marched beside his governor's float. Two "Super Pichay" mascots, which he used in last year's ceremonial campaign, joined the parade.

But the Sunday crowd that braved the rains was drawn to the floats entered by leading television networks GMA-7 and ABS-CBN.

Network stars

Richard Gutierrez, Ice Caballo, Iwo Hino, Alfred Vargas and Jewel Mische were GMA stars.

They rode on a float highlighted by flowers arranged in a giant orange boat. The station unveiled itself as the "Kapuso" (one heart) network.

Rival ABS-CBN had actors Jessica Ylhan, Sofi Ito, Shaina Gerald Andersen and Rico Chin on its float.

ABS-CBN presented the more acclaimed float, staged by the phrase "One Family. One Network."

The network switched to an interview with a mother expert when the GMA-7 float passed in front of ABS-CBN's for telecast of the parade.

Less impressed

Antony Angeles Panganiban was already impressed by a float sponsored by a pawnshop.

Mr. Angeles, a frequent festival celebrity, was dressed as a queen while atop a float sponsored by a soap manufacturer.

Gladys Gesue of Makati City said she appreciated the networks featuring their stars in the festival.

Ellen Sison of Manila was less impressed. "It went well but when there are celebrities, no one can see the floats and the crowd. They were screaming. We came here for the floats and the flowers, not the stars."

Edna Cardenas of La Union said she returned to watch the festival, but ended up watching it on television because of the rains.

She will be back at her Shrine!

The Miraculous

PILGRIM RELICS OF ST. THÉRÈSE

OF THE CHILD JESUS

On March 11 to March 13, 2008

On the last 3 days of her pilgrimage tour in the Philippines, "Metro Manilenes" are again privileged to pay homage and veneration to the Miraculous Pilgrim Relics of St. Therese of the Child Jesus before her departure on March 13, 2008.

Her miraculous relics will be on public exposition from March 11 to March 13, 2008 at the Shrine of St. Therese of the Child Jesus at Mandaluyan St., Villamor Air Base, Pasay City.

THE SHRINE ACTIVITIES OF HER LAST 3 DAYS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

MARCH 11, 2008

- 5:00 PM - Arrival Rites at the Shrine of St. Therese of the Child Jesus
- 5:30 PM - Mass
- Veneration of the Pilgrim Relics starts at 7:00 PM

MARCH 12, 2008

- 24 hour Veneration of the Pilgrim Relics
- Schedule of Masses: 6:30 AM, 12:00 NN, 5:30 PM
- A 45 min. performance by the CANZONET CHOIR starts at 7:00 PM.

MARCH 13, 2008

- 9:00 AM - Farewell Mass for the Relics of St. Therese of the Child Jesus to be officiated by the Papal Nuncio - Archbishop Edward Joseph Adams.
- Roses and Petitions to the Pilgrim Relics of St. Therese of the Child Jesus will be blessed immediately after the mass.
- Farewell Procession follows, from the Shrine of St. Therese of the Child Jesus to Kalayaan Hall, Villamor Air Base, Pasay City.

The 2nd Visit of the Miraculous Pilgrim Relics of St. Therese of the Child Jesus is a Spiritual Enrichment Event of

Military Ordinariate of the Philippines and MAGNIFICAT

Shrine of St. Therese of the Child Jesus
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* Confessions will be made available to the public.

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Corrections

IN THE FEB. 3 ISSUE, the caption of a photograph accompanying a Lifestyle article on Page 3/6—"S. Torres in love book wins at the troubadour table"—inadvertently omitted the names of the persons who took the picture. The photo was taken by Inqui-Pilagal.

* * *

IN EARLY COPIES OF THE FEB. 24 ISSUE, a story on Page B3 carried an erroneous headline. The headline should have read: "Unbeliebeam panel has new head"...not "DZxl's MBH panel gets new head."

* * *

Readers may send their requests for corrections of factual errors in writing to the Public Editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PCIJ Building, Times Street corner Mercedes Street, Bahayan City, Ave. Sts. 1907-07 (0) 924, e-mail address: ask@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Letters Editor Noel Pascual, e-mail address: letters@inquirer.com.ph or postmaster@inquirer.com.ph or fax his office at 896-6140. Also, Assoc. Editor Amando Doronila. For phone number is 897-3000 Local 3610.

The Daily Gospel

Monday, February 25, 2008
2nd Week of Lent

1st Reading: Is 1:10, 16-20
Gospel: Mt 23:1-12

When Jesus had come to Nazareth, he said to the people in the synagogue, "No prophet is honored in his own country. Truly, I say to you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens withheld rain for three years and six months and a great famine came over the whole land; Yet Elijah was sent to none of them but only to a widow of Zarephath, in the country of Sidon. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha, the prophet, and no one was healed except Naaman, the Syrian."

On hearing these words, the whole assembly became enraged. They rose up and brought him out of the town, to the edge of the hill on which their town was built, intending to throw him down the cliff. But he passed through their midst and went his way.

Commentary:

The selection of Jesus as the forerunner of Messiah-Savior fulfilled the role of the forerunner in Jerusalem on the day of his exaltation. Though He spoke nothing but the truth, He was not well received by His own people.

He can expect any better treatment when we speak the truth about contemporary issues of our day such as the dignity of the human person from the moment of conception until natural death? Being a follower of Jesus means sharing in His suffering. His fear of rejection never stood in the way of being a person who spoke out for the cause of justice.

Christian Communications Foundation, Inc., 3 Manuel D. DP Hills, Diliman, Quezon City, DP-D1, and a mailing address: Quezon City, Tel. No. 3721-49-00, Fax No. 3721-49-00, E-mail: ccf@ccf.org.ph, Website: http://www.ccf.org.ph/ccf/index.htm, Christian Communications Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit organization of Christian laymen and women in the Philippines. Copyright 2008 Christian Communications Foundation, Inc. Quezon City. All rights reserved. Printed in the Philippines.

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Another Edsa ...

From page A1

dence shows that more and more business people are more open to the possibility of an extraconstitutional change in government under specific conditions.

This shift has become more palpable over the past few months and sentiments readily with the sentiments of just a couple of years ago of business leaders who speak regularly in the business.

Major change needed

Makati Business Club trustee Jose L. Cuisia Jr., who played an active role in Ed. 1, said constitutional changes under which the country could recover another people power.

"I agree with Archbishop Angel N. Lagdameo about what he calls a different brand of people power," he said.

Cuisia, who is also president and chief executive officer of Philamlife, said another people power would make sense if there were massive protests in Mendiluel. And it would result in a major change in the country's leadership.

"[Still-may need people power again] because reforms have not taken place and the system remains the same [groups]," Cuisia said.

Try again to get it right

SCP & Co. chair David Balangue also believes that the country can survive another people power convulsion, saying that people have to "try again" after failing to get it right in the last episode.

"We need to try and try again until we get it right, because the options of shocks and indecision [provided] for in the Constitution are not working," Balangue said.

Other members of the business community, however, warned of dire consequences should another people power occur.

Raul T. Concepcion said the country could not afford another revolt unless it would bring the country together as happened in Edsa I in 1986.

"Edsa I was correct in this respect, but Edsa II in 2001 was different," Concepcion said. "We can't have an Edsa III because it would not change the system."

Bad for business

The Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry also opposed the idea, with its chair Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr. warning that people power would be "almost fatal" to the economy at this point.

"The Edsa I people power was OK. The second was a problem," Ortiz-Luis said. "A third would be very bad [for business]."

Shielded from politics

Economists also favor opposing views on whether another people power will adversely affect the country's economy, which some say has just started to take off following the 35-year high gross domestic product growth of 7.3 percent last year.

Delfin Mabito, an economist from the Ateneo de Manila University, said he believes that the Philippine economy has somehow developed a wall shielding it from the goings-on in politics.

"The economy seems to have a life of its own. Last year, we saw how the peso strengthened and stock market prices rose to record highs despite political problems," Dalisto said.

Growth despite GMA

Economist Benjamin Diokno of the University of the Philippines does not believe another people power would be bad for the economy. The economy should not be made on reasons for doing what's best for the country, he said.

"The economy has grown despite Mrs. [GMA]," he said.

"It's more because of unnamed OFW [overseas Filipino workers] remittances and the favorable global economic environment. If she has to go because she has lost the moral authority to govern, then she has to go."

But economist Victor Abola said another people power would undermine the economy's institutions and weaken political stability which could deter any investors.

From the outside, however, the verdict is divisive.

The Philippine economy is widely seen to be in a stronger position to survive any domestic political turbulence like another uprising. And not necessarily emerge out of it unscathed.

"Given that the macroeconomic fundamentals are now stronger than they were three or four years ago, that means that whatever disruption that may occur, whether it's people power revolution or something else, the economy will be able to withstand more," said Agnes Bolaid, sovereign credit analyst at Standard & Poor's.

"But, of course, events of such nature will threaten to undo some of the progress," Bolaid said.

Despite the disparate views among business people, it is clear that the dangerous credit crisis that has rocked the United States—whether long- or short-term—will inevitably affect the economy as well as the effects of politics on the economy.

"I think our economy is resilient enough that it should survive over the long term," said JV Encomienda de Ojos, president of Sulu Pacific Capital Inc. Reported by Jerome Dominguez, Doris C. Dumlao, Michelle V. Ramos, Abigail L. Ho, Rino F. Olchoveda and Ruelen L. Lucas

Stalemate benefits generals

From page A1

demonstrators in Baku.

The country numbers over the alleged corruption scandals involving the 4-year-old second administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo. A municipal people power movement seeks to cut the life of her administration before it carries out its elected term in 2010.

While demand is mounting on Ms Arroyo to resign over the corruption scandal arising from the canceled $329-million National Broadband Network (NBN) contract with China's ZTE Corp., not enough people are angry to be mobilized for mass action to step up pressure on the President to quit.

The economy of the first people power upheaval in which more than a million P.I. Quino went to the barricades to end 14 years of the dictatorship of President Ferdinand Marcos is not exchanging in the current context. As the reconstruction of public rail, her calling for the President's resignation escalates, the danger increases for the resistance of the regime by other means.

The longer Ms Arroyo stays in office, and the deeper her unpopularity sinks, the more she loses the moral authority to govern.

The impasse invites entitlements to intervention, not excluding a fresh round of military coups and plots, historically endemic and rife in the divided military establishment.

People power has been defined as an extraconstitutional and extraordinary mode to change unpopular regimes rocked by revelations and allegations of abuse of power—such as those bedevilling the Arroyo government.

Filipinos have been beguiled by the Idealized 1986 People Power Revolution as a broadly based populist movement. They have regarded people power as a painless panacea for political change, turning them in full bark in it as a quick fix and reinvestment solution to political deadlocks.

The problem—as pointed out by former President Fidel Ramos, one of the key players in the 1986 People Power Revolution—is that it is being misdefined by anti-Arroyo protest groups, but "the elements for a successful people power are not just present."

Perennial turmoil

The failure of people power to come to the rescue in breaking the standoff dominately creates crises that make it difficult for the President to govern and put the regime in a state of perennial turmoil.

These crises include movement of coup plots and renewed attempts to impeach the President over accusations of corruption in the NBN contract and the use of police powers in the abduction of key witness Rodolfo Noel Lozada Jr. to prevent him from testifying at the Senate inquiry on the deal.

The slow-burn outrage against the Arroyo administration over the corruption allegations related to the NBN deal is economic over prolonged political disturbances that would lead to instability of government. This is the danger posed by the continuation of the impasse.

The protest movement is building momentum as the Senate investigation continues. The senior civil society protesters are impatient and cannot wait for the end of the President's term in 2010. But the magic of people power has wained and is no longer available to reignite the mass movement of 1986.

Interventionist role

Attempts to reinvent People Power 1, with its mass civilian component, play into the hands of the President and the generals who, regardless of their loyalty or disloyalty to the constitutional civil government, realize that the current impasse has cost them to prevent intervention with either to seize power for themselves or withdraw support from the Arroyo administration.

They thus hold the President and the political system hostage even as she momentarily to defy increasing civil society demands for her resignation. Clearly, the main beneficiary in this inevitable stalemate is the military, which has remained a decisive intervener and swing element in crisis resolution since 1986.

The Arroyo administration remains mired on financial probity, and civil authority and the constitutional system remain hostage to general intervention.

The history of Edsa as a quick fix, painless decision to resolve the predicament of the increasingly unsustainable, electorally bounded Philippine democracy has faded over the past two decades. The original members of the Edsa triumvirate—former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Ramos, and the Marcos regime's Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile—have parted ways and have their own perspectives on Edsa.

Ramos' endorsement

On the eve of the Edsa 1 anniversary, Ramos, a key player in Edsa 1, castigated Ms Arroyo at the wreath-laying ceremony at the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

"It is customary nowadays to denigrate or minimize the importance of the Edsa events—perhaps because the greed and the apathy and the corruption we brought down during those days are once again making themselves felt," he said.

Implicit in Ramos' speech was an endorsement of the new edifice people power. He said: "History might yet call us to come together again—to offer our lives and fortunes on the altar of our civil ideals." He underscored the need to "banish from our political and economic life" oligarchies, dynasties and opportunists.

Ramos fell short of denouncing Ms Arroyo as unworthy of the Edsa tradition. Ms Arroyo is the beneficiary of People Power II in 2001, which deposed President Joseph Estrada. This followed the aborted impeachment trial of Estrada at the Senate tainted as a result of the "jueteng" payoff and corruption scandal.

Hopelessly unstable

Threatened by a third people power movement in 22 years, Ms Arroyo sought to denigrate the movement. She warned: "The world embraced Edsa 1. The world welcomed Edsa II. The world will not forgive an Edsa III [of which she is the target]."

Another popular tarnish would not be acceptable to the rest of the "Free World," she said. Instead, she said, "it will condemn the Philippines as a country whose political system is hopelessly unstable."

The President offers a self-serving perspective of the Edsa tradition. It is a distraction and superficial revision of history. The Edsa tradition is not the cause of political instability. The upheavals can be traced to the corruption and venalities stemming from bad governance.

The Edsa myth has failed to deliver the political and moral reforms the people power participants expected from it. The reinvention and humiliation of the Edsa tradition betrayed the people's aspirations.

The people and the Edsa tradition are not to blame for the weak response to the arrival of the Edsa 1 sensation today.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is welcomed by residents of Barangay Bacterio in Pursiaupa City during her visit to the Bacterio Elementary School.

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Villar sees impeachment

From page A1

ter a weak impeachment complaint was filed against her to shield her from a stronger one last year.

In a radio interview on Saturday, Ms Arroyo said she was made aware in April last year of possible corruption in the National Broadband Network (NBN) deal with ZTE Corp.

She said she was told about possible irregularities the night before she attended the signing ceremony in Hainan, China.

"How can you cancel the night before when you are negotiating with a foreign country?" Ms Arroyo said. "The signing proceeded, but at the first opportunity, I spoke with the president of China to tell him that we have to cancel the project."

Sensing no her admission, an opposition senator called for an inquiry into the President's role in the corruption scandal.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said he would ask the Senate committees investigating allegations of corruption in the ZTE deal to look into Ms Arroyo's statements and assess whether she violated antigraft laws.

"What GMA (the President) did or did not do after she learned that construction was moving under the ZTE-NBN deal on the eve of its signing is the smoking gun that links her to the scandal," Pimentel said.

Ms Arroyo scrapped the deal on Oct. 2, 2007, after Jose "Joey" de Venecia III, head of a firm which failed to get the NBN deal, testified in a Senate probe that the then-elections chief and the President's husband had ordered him to abandon his bid for the project.

De Venecia said the deal was overpriced by $130 million to fund kickbacks to government officials. (The NBN project sought to digitally link government offices and municipalities down to the barangay level.)

Then Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. was forced to resign after Romulo Neri testified in the Senate that Abalos had offered him P200 million to endorse the ZTE project proposal to the then director general of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda). Both Abalos and the President's husband deny any wrongdoing.

The scandal was revived earlier this month when Rodolfo Noel Lozada Jr., a former government consultant to the NBN project, reiterated the kickback allegations.

He testimony has galvanized opposition groups who, along with some Catholic bishops, students and members of the business community, have renewed calls for Ms Arroyo's resignation.

She yesterday defended her husband. "My family is not engaged in any business in government. It's not acceptable and we know that," she said in a speech after Mass in Hilongos. (For story on Page A5.)

Aversion to corruption

Ms Arroyo reiterated that she shared the people's aversion to corruption. She said she swiftly moved to cancel the deal "the moment I learned there was the slightest suspicion of anomaly" in the project.

"We just wanted to properly advise the Chinese government about the cancellation of the NBN project," she said.

The President said that like the people she, too, was giving much weight and importance in the NBN issue. "I assure our countrymen that those found guilty here will be punished," she said.

Pimentel said Mr Arroyo's "belated defense was weak and only betrayed her poor sense of judgment and responsibility in presenting irregularities in government projects."

"The President has to explain why she agreed to financing the NBN project through a loan from China, a diversion from her original position to implement the project through a build-operate-transfer scheme, he said.

Sen. Manuel Roxas II said Ms Arroyo's admission only refuted her "I am sorry" speech at the height of the "Hello Garci" tape controversy in 2005, which the opposition used against her in the elections.

"Now (as we believe in the sincerity and motives of the President to set things right in the face of [executive] betrayal by GMA, the Lozada abduction and harassment clearly intended to impede truth and justice," said Roxas.

EO 464 bars Cabinet secretaries and other officials of the executive branch from testifying in Congress without the President's permission.

Malacañang's direct hand

Sen. Francis Pangilinan noted that the President turned around and declared that the NBN deal was unviable by two parties five months after declaring that there was no hard evidence for pushing the deal.

"If its investigation in September found nothing was wrong, was Malacañang being direct? If the President is saying she found out that there were irregularities only on the eve of the signing, is she lying now? The contradictions are glaring and they suggest that Malacañang had a direct hand in steering (to the contentious deal," Pangilinan said.

In an interview aired over dzBB radio, Villar shot down the President's excuse that it was too late to renege on the deal and that it would be a huge embarrassment for the country.

"She could have made up an excuse that she was sick and the other party would have understood. There is no need to sign something that is clearly illegal to us just to lose face. That's too much for just saving face," he said.

Villar said Ms Arroyo should have opted not to sign the contract because ZTE was not China. "It's just one company, one transaction" and it was more important for the President to protect the interest of Filipinos, Villar said.

"In normal times have more acceptable if she waited only two weeks to cancel the deal, but she waited five months before suspending it and only after Joey de Venecia and Secretary Neri had come out to bare the bribes involved in the deal," he added.

Villar wondered why the President would even up to a quarrel by illegal act after going through a grand cover-up stating practically all the measures of the government just to keep the details of the NBN-ZTE deal away from the public eye.

Panic

He said Ms Arroyo might have "panicked" into admitting to the deal's flaws just to solve the problem, which has become worse because of the conflicting statements issued by her people to save the deal.

"It's a gamble just like her 'I am sorry' speech, but I'm not sure if it will pay off. Her credibility has become even worse after that. In her case, most of the people already believe that the charges of corruption in ZTE are true even before her admission," Villar said.

He reckoned that the President made the admission to address public opinion rather than her legal troubles.

"She is more worried about the outrage against her on ZTE and the Lozada kidnapping. She felt she could soften the people's view of her but when she asked for forgiveness," said Villar.

Implicating herself

In the House of Representatives, Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño Jr. said that by admitting that anomalies had attended the NBN deal but still went ahead with it, Ms Arroyo implicated herself more in the corruption scandal.

"She kept silent and never ordered an investigation despite knowing about the anomalies. That's a violation of her constitutional duty to uphold the rule of law," he said in a statement.

He added: "We can't wait until the impeachment. People will have to look for other options, and this is correct via people power."

Ms Arroyo's allies in the House, including Speaker Prospero Nograles, had defended the President minutes after impeached herself more in the deal. "How can she be impeached when she canceled the deal?" Nograles said in a text message.

To prove she's serious in rooting out corruption, Cibac party-list Rep. Joel Villanueva suggested that Ms Arroyo go on leave, and call all her Cabinet men to tell all in an ongoing Senate inquiry into the deal. *With a report from Reuters*

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1.3 Lot 1-C	Bldg & Lot	1,000	P 3,000,000.00	
1.4 Lot 2 (Triangular Lot)	Bldg & Lot	22,000	P 56,100,000.00	

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1. The sales of the properties shall be on an "AS IS WHERE IS" basis.
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   20% - minimum downpayment
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   Minimum annual escalation rate 10%
   Minimum Monthly Rental Rate

Lot 1 – A	P 367,000.00
Lot 1 – B	240,000.00
Lot 1 – C	48,000.00
Lot 2	280,000.00

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6. Bidding documents will be issued from the Marketing and Sales Department located at the 6th Floor, Ipil Building, 330 EDSA Mandaluyong, Makati City, upon payment of non-refundable fee of P10,000.00 on March 24-28, 2008.
7. Schedule of Activities

Activities	Date/ Time
Publication of Invitation to Bid	February 25 & 26, 2008
Submission of Letter of Intent & Issuance of Bid Documents	March 24-28, 2008
Pre-Bid Conference	2:00 PM of April 1, 2008
Deadline of submission of Bid Proposals/Offer	3:00 PM of April 17, 2008

8. The public bids shall be opened in the conference room, 6th Floor, Ipil Building, 330 EDSA Mandaluyong, Makati City.
9. The HGC reserves the right to reject any or all offers and to waive any defects or to accept such offer as may be advantageous to the Corporation.

For inquiries, please call our Marketing and Sales Department at 896-0426 or 897-44-44 or visit our Office at Ipil Building, 330 EDSA Mandaluyong, Makati City.

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(PDI – February 24 & 25, 2008)

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INQUIRER

MANILA WATER SERVICE UPGRADE IN SAN JUAN

Manila Water will undertake service improvement projects which will cause temporary water supply interruption in the following portions of San Juan:

Schedule: 11:30 p.m. Tuesday, February 26, 2008 up to 4:00 a.m., Wednesday, February 27, 2008

Affected areas:

San Juan: Barangays St. Joseph, Onse, Isabelita, Little Baguio (P. Guevarra, Ventura and Re-Race Sts.), Maytukoa and Sta. Lucia

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For updates, please call our Customer Care Hotline 1627

(PDI – Feb. 25, 2008)

Arms firm sues bank over deposit

MV ARMS TRADING company has filed a damage claim against the Philippine Bank of Communications for allowing a check addressed to the firm to be deposited in the private accounts of two of its employees.

In an affidavit filed in the Makati Prosecutor's Office, complainants Brad Arcadeda and Adam Jimenez, also part-owners of Clay and Feather International Inc., charged PBCom allowed part-owners Arcadeda and Clifford Lichauco to deposit a P484,500 check payable to Clay and Feather into their personal accounts.

"PBCom betrayed its depositor, Clay and Feather, when it allowed the deposit to a personal account and not to the account of Clay and Feather," Inandan and Jimenez said in their complaint.

They said the breach of trust by the bank caused a loss of P484,500 to Clay and Feather.

PBCom has apologized to the complainant for the deposit which was made on Nov. 29, 2005, but has not reimbursed Clay and Feather, the complainants said.

Arcadeda and Jimenez said the bank did not respond to a demand letter sent on Jan. 7, 2008.

Aside from P500,000 in exemplary damages and P400,500 in actual damages plus 20 percent interest, Clay and Feather is also asking for P150,000 in attorney's fees and other litigation expenses.

Clay and Feather earlier filed a counterclaim against the Lichauco families, charging them with 228 counts of estafa for allegedly defrauding the company of P7.395 million worth of sales. Julie M. Aurelio

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Mr. Ramon Casiple
Mr. Benjie Tolosa

Date: February 27 (Wednesday), 2008
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Venue: Rosendo Herrera Hall, San Beda College Alabang

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Forum Convenors: Fr. Antonio J. Chiaparoli, OSB, Dean Geraldine Barcoma, Vice Dean Jose Vasquez, Prof. Rommel Cortiz, Dean Maria Asuncion Aquino, Dr. Maywell Faricillo, Dr. Faustino Ismatanto III, Prof. Rafael Dolor, and Prof. Arcadio Valdecanas

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GMA tells foes ...

From page A1

and my case with or any dismissed from office only when my term ends," she said emphatically.

Ms Arroyo indicated she had the confidence the people wanted in a leader.

"Our people want leaders that are God-loving, pro-poor, unafraid to make tough choices, hardworking and loyal to the people of the nation," she said. "These are values I live by. These are values I expect to be judged on when my term ends."

She also said: "We all know I am not perfect, but I have worked hard every day to achieve positive and lasting change for the nation."

Patronizing how her administration had created some 1 million new jobs and brought in new investments, Ms Arroyo pledged to work "to fix the corruption that still plagues our nation."

She slammed her political foes who make "internet allegations" that her administration is the most corrupt.

Ms Arroyo said the growing economy was the best proof that the allegation was incorrect.

"Countries with corrupt administration will not grow the fastest in one generation or have much money in government coffers, or would launch campaigns to go against rice cheats or prosecute cases against officials, if they are not transparent," she said.

Ms Arroyo also assailed those who said she had a "midnight Cabinet" — an allegations made by 12 to 16 Senators, led of ousted Speaker Jose de Venecia.

"We sing Pangala, with rig the 12 are the Senators, and no one else," Ms Arroyo said, adding again in Filipino: "I am the one making the decisions on matters of government, and not those without such duties."

She spoke about how she began work

'GMA dead serious on corruption fight'

PRESS SECRETARY IGNACIO R. BUNYE YES-terday said the recent banner "GMA admits deal feared" put words in the President's mouth.

In a letter faxed to the reporter, Bunye said:

"First and foremost, she is deadly serious about fighting corruption. The people are mad about corruption and she is, too. She shares the people's concerns which is why she took quick and decisive action to cancel the entire transaction the minute she heard there was even a suggestion of impropriety.

"Your banner, however, obviated her statement a bit too far.

"That said, allow me to state other moves taken by her administration in the continuing fight against corruption. She has created and/or is in the process of creating an Ombudsman-supported battalion strengthening of our anti-graft capability. And she has taken direct action to ensure that any and all other similar projects are under strict review by outside observers to guarantee no corruption occurs.

"This year, she will work with Congress to pass a 2008 Anti-Corruption Reform Act to close loopholes and increase penalties for corruption."

early in the day and finished late into the night.

Ms Arroyo reiterated that the "world will not forgive me if she, Ms Arroyo, warning that instead would shy away if another people power uprising should emerge.

"How would we weather the difficulties arising from the spikes in the price of crude oil in the world market and the global economic slowdown?" she said.

Ms Arroyo acknowledged that Charter change would not happen during her presidency. She is in favor of it, however.

She expressed the hope her successor would have the courage to fix the country's political system.

"We challenge our political leaders who are seeking the presidency in 2010 to develop a positive agenda for change and reform," Ms Arroyo said, adding that people want peace and stability and not an "endless saga of political vendetta and ceaseless investigations."

Force for good

As if responding to the "evil" tag given to her, she ended her speech by saying: "We are deeply committed to being a force of good."

At one point, Ms Arroyo committed a gaffe when, intending to mention Speaker Prospero Nograles, she blurted out instead the name of De Venecia, her erstwhile ally.

Ms Arroyo was speaking at that point about how she intended to address the problem of corruption in the bureaucracy in view of the NBN controversy.

"We aim to take control of the situation and Congress will help us [address the problem of corruption] and here is Speaker De Venecia ... Speaker Nograles ..." she said, immediately correcting her slip.

She laughed at the mistake, as did her audience.

Nograles was among the few government officials who attended yesterday's Mass.

Still grinning at her gaffe, Ms Arroyo said Malacañang would help Congress push for the passage of an anti-corruption reform law this year to prevent more corruption in the bureaucracy as well as add more penalties for the crime of corruption.

"We will hold officials accountable if they are found to be guilty ... No one will be above the law."

While she did not mention the De Venecias, Ms Arroyo was apparently referring to those when she said: "My family is not expected to any business with the government."

De Venecia's son, businessman Jerry de Venecia, has accused Mike Arroyo of receiving bribes in the NBN-ZTE deal.

Ms Arroyo's sons, "Mikee" and "Dato" Arroyo, defended their mother from allegations she tolerated corruption.

PR and communication professionals and friends of the International Association of Business Communicators' Asia Pacific Region will meet at the new Wyatt Hotel in Manila and then at the Boracay Regency Hotel at Alulen's world famous beach resort on March 3 – 6, 2008

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Re: Todd Hunter
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Ayala SMART GMA7

Solons decry try to spy on them

By Gil Cabuenagan Jr.
Inquirer

MINORITY SOLONS PUshing away an antibugging bill by the palace to put up close-circuit television (CCTV) cameras on the Senate premises ostensibly to secure the lawmakers, including President Manuel Villar, the majority decided short Congress on Saturday from the Philippine National Police to set up the equipment.

Villar said the cameras were meant for spying rather than monitoring the traffic around the Senate building. The chamber is currently investigating a controversial $200 million road project involving President Macapagal-Arroyo and her husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo.

Angry

"What they should do is just tell the CCTVs in Makati[illegible] be[illegible] cause they are the ones who need the protection," said assistant Villar in an interview over dzBB radio.

"I am angry because they have to include even the Senate in the monitoring. This is clearly a move to intimidate the people and not for the security of the country," he said.

Public outcry

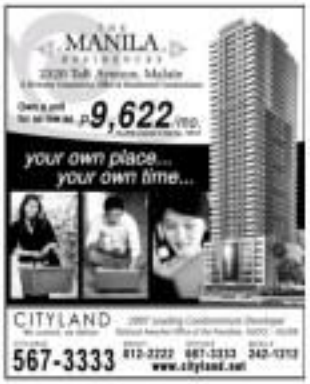
Villar issued a statement over the weekend protesting the PNP plan to put up at least 26 CCTV around the metropolis amid the rising political tension. There was a public outcry over the CCTVs set up outside La Salle Green Hills, which served as a sanctuary for 9[illegible] security men Rodolfo Lozada Jr. and Sr. Abraham Gilo Gilbuga.

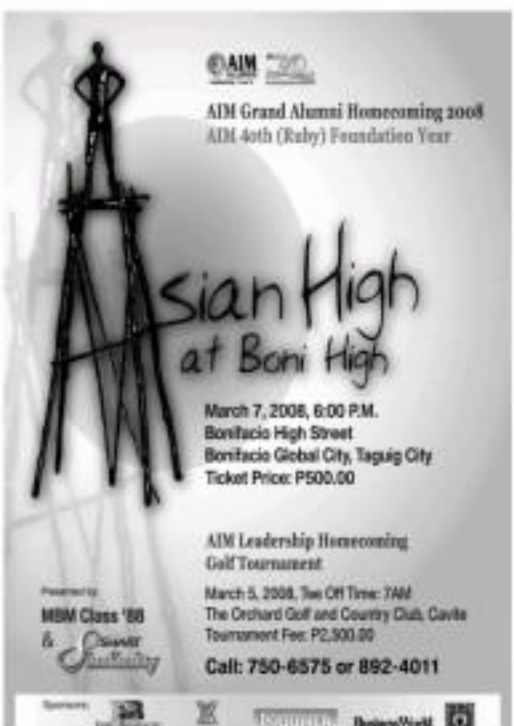
"What is Malacañang afraid of?" said Villar, noting the 9[illegible] was also a paranoid, repressive person[illegible] more like the Marcos administration.

Big right

Sen. Panfilo Lacson said the CCTVs were a big slight on the Senate. "I myself will lead the dismantling of these cameras. They are already monitoring our calls, this is too much," Lacson said.

Sen. Benigno Aquino III said the Senate will question the PNP's priorities "How come it is buying more CCTVs when it does not even have enough money to buy the 20,000 patrol[illegible] needed by the police force? Will these[illegible] with cameras, the PNP should be transferred to the Department of Transportation instead," Aquino said.





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INQUIRER

OPINION

Your opinion matters to us

Glory days

THEY LOOK A LITTLE WORSE FOR WEAR NOW, 22 years after the phenomenon we call People Power first emerged. We mean those four heady days in 1986, when millions of Filipinos converged on that stretch of the Epifanio de los Santos Avenue in Quezon City between Santolan road and Ortigas Avenue. In the beginning, the massing of unarmed civilians was meant simply

EDITORIAL

to protect a breakaway group of military rebels. Very quickly, the scope of people turned into resistance—most famously against a column of tanks sent in by the dictator Ferdinand Marcos to crush the rebels—and then, dramatically, into a revolution.

The tide of history changed rapidly. Marcos, a lawyer to the last, still stage-managed an oath-taking. If he was going into exile, it would be with the legal mantle of a re-elected president. But on the fourth day even he knew that history—in the shape of a waiting US military helicopter—had caught up with him.

With very little blood shed, and in fiesta-like fashion, the country's long nightmare in "constitutional authoritarianism" finally ended.

The first thing we must remember, when we revisit those glory days of February 1986, is that the anniversary is on the 25th, not the 22nd. Juan Ponce Enrile, the leader of the military faction that repaired to Camp Aguinaldo on Feb. 22, prefers to commemorate the Edsa revolution on the day it started. This is an understandable conceit—it was the last day Enrile and the Reform the Armed Forces Movement had (relative) control of events. (To be sure, the rebels had been found out, their plan to seize control of Malacañang easily thwarted. However, the decision to make a last stand in Camp Aguinaldo and to recruit Lt. Gen. Fidel Ramos, the military professional most respected in the AFP, was theirs.)

But Feb. 22 was a mere breakaway; Feb. 25 was a revolution. That reformist officers would try to seize power was no surprise; this was an inevitable consequence of Marcos' politicization of the military (symbolized by his appointment of former driver Fabian Ver as chief of staff). Because of that policy, officers like Col. Gregorio Honasan of RAM instinctively saw themselves as members of the political class, ready to run the country.

That unarmed civilians would prove to be a source of transformative political power was, on the other hand, a complete surprise. The idea of volunteers offering their own lives to protect others—the essence of the appeal aired first by Butz Aquino and then, more effectively, by Jaime Cardinal Sin on the night of Feb. 22—was not new; it flowed directly from the principle of active nonviolence that animated much of the anti-Marcos opposition. Only the previous week, at Cory Aquino's post-election rally dubbed "Tagumpay ng Bayan," rather ostentatiously, the opposition leader and democratic icon called for a buoyant if crazy campaign. It was the same spirit of nonviolent confrontation at work. But nobody, not even Sin, could have foreseen the dramatic consequences of millions of volunteers converging on Edsa.

That is the second thing we must remember, when we revisit those glory days. At a certain point, perhaps late on the third day, perhaps early on the morning of the fourth, the ouster of Marcos became inevitable. But before that "point in time" was reached, nobody knew what was going to happen. People Power, as the Filipino people gave birth to it, is a true gift: it is something unplanned for, something unexpected.

The third thing we must remember is implied in the second. People Power may descend on us as a gift, but it is also something we must prepare ourselves for. This is hardly a novel idea. The poets of republicanism in ancient Greece and in revolutionary America reminded us that a political commonwealth is founded on public virtue. Kind taught us that we must be worthy of our liberty. People Power, in other words, must be deserved.

The freedom struggle began even before Marcos declared martial law; it survived the 1970s; it gained new life after the Aquino assassination in 1983. Millions of Filipinos had learned to shake off the don of political apathy that had entombed them after Sept. 21, 1972; millions had taken to the streets, would for opposition candidates in the 1984 parliamentary elections, hoothered to Cory Aquino's call in the Snap Election, taken part in innumerable street protests and prayer rallies. When People Power happened, we the people were taken by surprise, but we were also ready.

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Don't be a fence-sitter, join the rallies

DON'T BE A FENCE-SITTER, JOIN TODAY'S rallies to celebrate the anniversary of People Power, the one shining moment in our history that the whole world applauded. Without any of the virtues, without any falsification, we supplied the missing ingredient to the success of the original People Power and the succeeding ones were disappointing, and now unnerving, as we mount our celebration of its anniversary. Here it not for that, we would still be ruled today by hostile illiterates and, after having been by Benigno Aquino Jr. That's reason enough to be thankful for People Power 1986, despite the People Power 2001.

The administration is understandably trying to prove solid reason we today's rallies threatened it is also why it is trying to discredit and suppress mass movements as they did in the earlier years until President Ferdinand Marcos fled, and then President Joseph Estrada next, were forced to flee Malacañang. Assuming that the people power movement of 1986 and of 2001 were the heroic governments, administration officials are afraid it would be EMS herself who would be forced to flee the Palace next. That's not to be said in earnest, but if one does not have a guilty conscience, why should he or she worry that?

Anyway, Malacañang's minions have been hammered to discourage another People Power. The people are tired, they are disappointed, they say that we have been angles from childhood and if a few of you don't want to go out try again. Yes, we go to prove Presidents after People Power I, but have no reason to give up. We made a mistake in that one, so we should correct that mistake. All the more reason that we should try again. And if that doesn't succeed, then we should try once more until we succeed. What will happen to this world if we do this failure, because things are getting and give up? Many of the modern struggles that we enjoy today and the modern freedoms that have saved they were achieved after many years of trying. We wouldn't be enjoying them today if their inventors gave up after their first or second failures.

People Power I did not mess up, it merely failed, three years were bigger and bigger and Malacañang itself was besieged and Mar-

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

cos had to flee to save himself. And it took many years before the Filipino people could regain for the angel of the people to administer to their pain. The same thing may happen to us. Ang's rallies. They may become bigger and bigger as more and more people join them.

And you, you see, classes do on the fence, totally uninterested in what is going on around you. It's your life and the future of your children that are at stake. You have to be involved to assure a bright future for them. As John Donne said, "no man is an island separate from the rest of the world." Every man's destruction diminishes me," he wrote. Don't be like the man who refuses to help a neighbor put out a small fire in the latter's house because it is far from his own house, until the fire spread and engulfed his house. Maybe you have not yet been a victim of government abuse now, but if you do not help prevent those abuses now, they will eventually get to you.

In connecting now that you can be proud of, stand up and be counted.

* * *

The question has often been asked: Did President Macapagal-Arroyo know about the overpricing and bribery in the P35 NBN deal? Ex-Chief Justice Hilario Davide, Jr. and Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Sergio Apostol, Jr. have always said that she did not know.

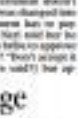
What do you think? Here are the undisputed facts:

Her original order for the national broadband network was a NEW limited-spectrum, 3-month project with the government's share to spend anything. It was changed into a loan which the government has to pay. Then Socio Chair Romulo Neri said that he was offered a P200 million bribe to approve the deal. What did she say? "Don't accept it [when she could've said"I but ap-

Outrage

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



A HIDDEN PLOT THICKS ON EARTH, ON THIS spaced earth more than others. The late couple of Edsa had one sublime irony and that was that their both came shortly after the rulers had just seen a seemingly commanding victory loose at their moment of greatest triumph that the rulers suffered their greatest defeat.

At Nothland Marina' ass, he had just won the vote in the Snap Election of Feb. 7, 1986. Of course the elections were marked by massive fraud and even more massive violence, the latter of which was perpetrated by the forces that were close in terms of the capital building ass, wounded and bleeding, was chased all the way down to the other of a street across the park and finished off by his assassins. Despite that, Marcos was proclaimed winner and he ordered almost perfectly his enemies to have gotten a fresh mandate from the people.

A couple of weeks later, a throng flocked to the camps at Edsa to protest a beleaguered cover of military renegades. But right then, almost unnoticed, Cojuangco

In Ferdinand Marcos' case, he had just won the vote in the Snap Election of Feb. 7, 1986. Of course the elections were marked by massive fraud and even more massive violence, the latter of which was perpetrated by the forces that were close in terms of the capital building ass, wounded and bleeding, was chased all the way down to the other of a street across the park and finished off by his assassins. Despite that, Marcos was proclaimed winner and he ordered almost perfectly his enemies to have gotten a fresh mandate from the people.

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champagne before the war, Bush with power, drunk with power, filled with power.

But history does not always work. JDV's bleeding body one that the nation little mourned, a kid flushed out from the blue, the bullseye sending lightning in the direction of Bud. One unheard of fellow named Jun Lozada came along to say his piece, to speak his truth. In an instant, the whole country was in the grip of a fever. Lozada's testimony, one of epic proportions, and truly you'd have had to find a lower word. Exactly three weeks ago, I would never have thought a romantic possible. Exactly three weeks ago, GMA was at her zenith of power, at the very pinnacle of her term. Brutally through Charter change is to succeed through by Prospero Nograles. Today Nograles stands to be the shortest-lived Speaker ever. Today, GMA is fighting for her life.

Either has happened in that small stretch of time a day something has turned back to ash and gave its life back to the country. That something is public outrage. Loud, explosive, spontaneously combustive outrage. Only three weeks ago, I myself was slowly drifting into the camp that had given it up for dead. Nothing could awake us shake us from what everyone (rightly) called apathy, to wrench us of wrongdoing could make us something angry into a raging fire.

Then suddenly, this could not have been a dyan a couple of weeks ago and see were the outrage rippling through the street. We could see how watched "Hacienda" on TV the day after

and can heard in Canada's TV person using the outrage booming like Joshua's trumpets. We could not have stood at La Salle Greenhills and the day after and not smelled the outrage doing like early morning fog to cover the streets of Pasig Ilaya. You could not have walked through the halls of Congress and the Senate and not felt Friday and not sensed the outrage like the first drops of rain after a golden drought. You could not have breathed, or eaten, or lived, these past three weeks, failing to realize and recognize and acknowledging to make, and TV, talking to reporters, friends and coworkers, and not have felt the outrage throbbing within in the air of the land like a heart beat.

A great deal of this owes to our nature, and I do not know that we have thanked him enough for it. Former Senator Lito Lapid has contended since more damn the damnation a couple of Edsas ago, they never seemed only with the idea of "wish, dream of support." Today the hunkus that will come out to change the charge the, which Lapid has still believed, I don't know that we will, certainly today is to follow the clarion command, not to hesitate is that in the chair of evil—will be armed not just by the force of "withdrawal of support" but the power of "expression of support." You just by a need to negate all that is unconstitutional and to affirm all that is life-giving, not just by the need to stamp out all that is evil but by the need to uphold all that is good, not just by the need to scorn when we should have something ago but by the need to embrace that we have something to embrace. Not just to endure doing extraordinary things, we could be from ordinary things, not just to endure doing impossible dreams, we could be ordinary Lozadas saying our piece, speaking our truth before heaven and earth.

If history holds, that then history has always been in our hands.

* * *

So to Mass today. There's one at 2 p.m., at the Edsa Shrine to be concelebrated by Bishops Teodoro Bacani, Deogracias Iñiguez, Antonio Tobias and Pedro Arigo. There just Cory is Radcaya afterward. Be there. Be alive. Be outraged. Be restored.

1986! 2001! 2008?

Sounding Board

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

How about 2001? The mass movement was immediately triggered by the impeachment exercise which ended in the walk-out of senators and prosecutors. As to personal attribution, there was, waving in the breeze, a multicolored flag of opposition. But then there was still makbayan and rejoicing populist support. After all, she had earlier supported the senatorial decisions and hardly was the vice presidency (the bad one inherited the support won by her boss. But in 2001, the ouster of President Estrada was a bigger matter possible when police and military again turned against the Commander-in-Chief.

This is both 1986 and 2001: the participation of the military was an essential ingredient.

As I see things now, although there is widespread and mounting outrage against corruption in the administration, extra-constitutional action is not in sight. And if such action will be successful, it can only be with the full support of the military. But the military has learned its lesson: given victory of military adventurism, are prepared to accept a Burmese type of government.

How about "step" decisions? Besides the fact that a special election is skewed only when there is a vacancy in the presidency or vice presidency, the electoral process can't be less credible than that of 2004.

What do I suggest therefore? I favor serving up a rehabilitation of the presidency. To start with, I favor the complete dismantling of EO 464, the executive order which the President has clamped on the mouths of executive officers who are in a position to reveal her misdoing truth.

For it is true the objectionable portions of EO 464 (Section 21 and 3) have been declared unconstitutional. But the executive department continues to behave as if Senate v. Ermita never happened. This will force the executive department officers are afraid to testify in an investigation, surely do such officers enjoy the false sense of executive privilege. They simply say that they are prevented by EO 464. EO 464, although conceivably based on valid reasons, violates the biggest obstacle to the discovery of truth, for dark spots contained.

How dismantle EO 464? The most efficient way would be for the President and the executive secretary to forget it. Long too difficult, yes. Nevertheless that is a step that could be taken. Requiring the President to resign and deliberately jumping into the fire. Moreover, the total abandonment of EO 464 can be the beginning of the rehabilitation of her ailing presidency (e.g., she could even allow the opposition to have their own investigation in the corruption that caused her to subscribe ZTE contract. It would be a very sensitive way of administering her hard cross against corruption. Veto politics will, between now and 2010, much can be achieved to avoid rehabilitation of the presidency.

Whether or not the dark spirit of EO 464 will be totally neutralized must also depend in large area, now on the insistence of Congress. Congress is the institution most directly affected by the crippling effect of EO 464. The Senate's insistence that its investigation is entirely justified, does not grant relief unless properly asked. How we are standing what the Supreme Court will do with the Romulo-Mike case. But it was two votes against it, not the former.

Would the Supreme Court reverse itself? Its ruling being supported—one of distinguishing that the ruling might well include in its favor a clamor for the total abandonment of EO 464 and the dark spirit that inspired it. I am also hoping that the Romulo, as a body, and the obligation means will pass to this specific clause. It would be a very convenient way of campaigning for work. The mark can make even a beleaguered President free.

A Magsaysay awardee and senior citizens

LAST JAN. 23, 2008, LAWYER NELSON F. DIVINAGO PROmoted to a Associate Point Citizen (OIC) center in downtown Naga City (he ordered a "single chicken breast and small coleslaw" for takeout), announcing his senior citizen identification card. He was informed by the waiter that the senior citizen discount was not being honored for takeout orders, stating it was a restrictive policy of SFC.

Private Third a complaint with the mayor's office and the matter was referred by lawyer Angelo Querol, city legal officer. The Sangguniang Lungsod Office, in the person of Councilor Vivian Vitales, presented the side of SFC Naga.

Reveille

Ramon J. Farolan

As reported, the communications of both parties are couched in legalese but we can't do not wish to burden the reader with the language of lawyers. But in his recommendation to City Mayor Jesse M. Robredo, a Ramon Magsaysay awardee and his community service, Querol had this to say. "The issue is simple: Does the private entity covered by the privilege of senior citizens under Rep. Act No. 9257? The answer is "No, salarian orders are covered by the privilege especially so that it is very logical that Petitioner purchase of a single chicken meal and coleslaw can be considered by only one person like him."

"There is also a compelling doctrine in law that in case of doubt in construction and interpretation of social legislation statutes, the liberality of the law in favor of the beneficiary prevails in light of the Constitution's social justice policy."

In layman's language, I think the lawyer has basically, orders social legislation statutes are construed, the law should be interpreted liberally on the side of the beneficiary, in this case, the senior citizen. For its part, SFC argued that if restaurant "takeout" is covered by the discount, it would be subject to possible abuse through consumption by outsiders on not covered by the Senior Citizen law.

Mayor Jesse M. Robredo ordered the filing of a criminal case against SFC Naga for violation of Rep. Act No. 9257, known as the Expanded Senior Citizen Act of 2003. Robredo as Mayor Robredo for his prompt action on this issue, truly in the tradition of Ramon Magsaysay's people-oriented presidency.

I also wish to commend Benito for filing an official complaint regarding his treatment at the SFC branch. Too often when we are rebuffed in seeking the benefits due us, we merely grumble or curse them (privately). The proper action is to lodge the necessary complaint with the proper issues against unserved and hopefully some action is done. That is the only way we can get business establishments to follow the law. If we merely grumble, for the reminder to happen, we will see no complaint anything and business will continue to transgress the law as it sees fit.

But more of us are not lawyers like Penalos and the idea of filing a complaint with a government office can be quite daunting and an intimidating one. Unfortunately that is the price we pay if we wish to fully enjoy the benefits granted us by law.

May I add that it is not our goal to prosecute or punish business establishments. Our only desire is to see that the rights of senior citizens are upheld; if this is done, we would be happy to close the books and move on.

My advice to senior citizens is to call up the Office of Senior Citizens Affairs (OSCA) in the city or municipality where you live, for assistance. If OSCA personnel are on the ball, they should be able to help. If not, Undersecretary Alicia G. Bala of the Department of Social Welfare and Development has shown commendable concern for problems of this nature. We are also prepared to assist on this our limited.

* * *

Last month, I wrote about "Breakthrough Restaurant" in Bella City. They refused to honor the senior citizen discount of retired general And Hilda when he paid with his credit card. Incidentally, Retired Gen. Mr Erick Barbarito, is a resident of Bella City and was such her brother when the episode took place.

In their letter to the editor published on Feb. 18, 2008, Breakthrough Restaurant representative, saying that I should have checked my facts. Actually, it is Breakthrough Restaurant that did not check their facts. They have been living in the Philippines, during its last two visits (a total of under 12 years ago, in November 1992, as the basis of having a senior citizen his rights. We are now in the 21st century and we have a law, Rep. Act No. 9257, which is quite clear. A senior citizen is entitled to a 20 percent discount, among other things, food items. The law makes no distinction as to whether he is seen or by credit card, and when the law does not distinguish, no one should also distinguish.

Senior Welfare Undersecretary Alicia G. Bala has warned Breakthrough Restaurant of the penalties for violating Rep. Act No. 9257, and Bella City Mayor Jerry Tiwan has ordered the city legal officer, Lawyer Edgardo M. Gervacio Jr. Tomorrow, head, OSCA, to investigate the matter. We hope that the restaurant soon be right before further action is taken by these officials. As I said earlier, we are not after prosecution... we are after observance of the rights of senior citizens. If you think about it, this previous small amounts consider for the welfare of hundreds of a restaurant which prides itself in having the ambiance of choice for top government officials and foreign diplomats."

* * *

In Manitou City, Benjamin, Jr. Mario Solano anticipates that the Mercury Drug outlets in every community is now too friendly with senior citizens. When the outlets' guidelines and personnel bar senior citizens ID, the check presented as one that may use out of store for that particular medicine or item only a limited supply available. But since when the OIC not immediately identify herself as a senior citizen, she was able to buy all that she needed.

Calling the president of OSCA, chief, Col. Ursicino Pedrosa, Penalos took this matter. We would also appreciate it if Mercury Drug president Vivian Q. Rooms will help ensure that senior citizens, not just in Manitou City but in other parts of the country, are treated fair and square by the company. We are grateful for the change in policy as regards the use of credit cards in Mercury Drug outlets and we hope this matter can also be addressed in a comprehensive manner.

The root of the resident evil

Kris-Crossing Mindanao

Norodjon Mustafa

"event." He should not even back President Corazon Aquino, who was swept into the presidency by that event, for taking his forces out of the classroom where she remained such academics as agriculture and forestry that she was to become good fame and fortune through a fertile or such, and What for? Any hoards, her successful rogues, who barely sailed her a "heck" before unfavorable TV and suffering her on the public as malcontent and terrorist accomplices.

From there, it was an interruptible climb to the highest office in the land, thanks to the Commission and the drama Obscure.

Maybe yesterday in the limited house, should not be held of Vice Ganda Garcillano, having him upside down, maybe the words would spill out of his mouth. Maybe he will tell us secret once and for all what that marginal note on the issue of recommendation guaranteeing his recovery of Garcillano's property. Maybe he is a position in Committee commissioner multi-billion.

Maybe he can tell us how McArthur tapped all other monthly installment in that unfounded case. Maybe he can tell us how she won over all the other contenders to the throne. It is a great deal than that of the presidential candidates, more until in the 1998 election.

And this is when made me "excitement" than the one about something that Jun Lozada recounted to his party mates in the Senate. It was a joke I was receiving in La Salle Class 8206, about that cellphone call from then Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos, allegedly to Mr. Arroyo's husband.

The short dialogue, as quoted by Lozada, underscored how powerful the spouse is. I give you the terrible impression that he told the most powerful man in the country by the neck, literally so, as we would say in Tagalog.

Who sir? A Comelec chair appointed by his wife could not have a bad effect on her foreign and most decisive time with an embarrassed? And then could a Comelec chair be dictating the terms of a multi-million dollar government transaction?

Gentlemen, Lozada's brutal and others of their ilk could not have been the only problem Arabas. What other acts does Abalos have up his sleeve? What other deep dark secrets does he hold?

It is probably? Brian Poveda can that prompted the Supreme Court to hand down the decision that has given the green light for the "Hello Garci" tapes. Let not this opportunity slip from our hands. Let the witnesses call the thief of fund forgotten and play it over and over again to their august hall.

Abalos should now be summoned as a Senate hearing on the Garci tapes.

Should such an investigation determine beyond any reasonable doubt that Mr. Arroyo "won" the presidency through massive fraud, then that would reduce her to nothing but an impostor who has usurped the power of the people to challenge us in to the darkest period in our history.

We don't even have to look at the figure. They're fraudulent anyway. All we need to know is how.

And this former Comelec Chair Abalos can still be made to tell us how Garci "won" the votes. All we have to do is to watch him crying his heart out in the hearings to determine his "how" — in detail.

A long shot report said it has the votes in this "how of the fix" a "transition" in government. What we have to do is to wait and have it should come above will be upon us.

Bahala na, ika-nga nila sa Ambahan sa!

We fail to do this now, the stages of our apathy will be Garcia change forced down our throats; we will never see the light again; we will lose face; and we will have the tyrants and Pelaia and Abalos holding our souls in their hands to the end of our days. And even beyond.

Carpe diem!

* * *

Comments to rustyboi19@yahoo.com

When our representatives fail

The Long View

Manuel L. Quezon III

People Power to the pain cannot be for nonetheless, even of People Power in the future, and also that those who have participated in People Power in the past cannot claim that it should be denied authority in the future. Most of all, People Power is powerful, it is disciplined, it is idealistic, and it is a force for good and inclusive side by side and is the line of the together.

Last week I offered up conditions of People Power. It's a phenomenon that requires certain criteria for it to be recognized as such and not considered mere mob violence. People Power is the power of the chosen on moral courage and moral principles; it must be peaceful, it must have vast support cutting across all classes and sectors of society; it must at the same time be organized and not spontaneous.

We thought full well that People Power is also the instrument of last resort. The only question is not how and when, but rather, if enough of us have come to the conclusion that it must happen.

What I have not mentioned before, but now, from impeachment until this day, do not sit with the administration of the Union. A Union now dominated by her own cronies who are more powerful than the new Speaker. The Pendatun herself was subservient to Marcos for years, and the Senate has tried to cover up a fact she knows that the 2009 CTC that was a crooked one. So now, she's willing to sacrifice her underlings.

After the elections, we elected the individuals we elected, and, in effect, to serve a personality the President, in the parliament now.

And this is why I have tried to point out, no, that any political question involves issues and personalities in equal measure. We cannot and should not separate the two.

If you are after accountability and responsibility, it is logical with you making the choice to demand them, and treating someone, somewhere, be held to account. Even as we all recognize the problems are getting deeper and more widespread by the day, which is why I have been so critical.

A system may lend people or to criminals but when a criminal is caught, you begin by punishing the criminal and then addressing the factors that made him a criminal. You don't begin by focusing on the factors, to the exclusion of the criminals, in to embolden the criminals to run amok.

But we are a fundamentally kind people; we believe in redemption. Many still hold out the hope that our leaders can redeem themselves. I am one of those people.

I called for redemption on June 30, 2006; it has taken more than one by one, then redemption has taken place. But by you, person of society humanity now people, have not yet begun to make it clear to the President the benefit of the doubt, the only increased her number of accomplices, and so does the question has been reduced to this, will you tell someone being the President's accomplice, or not? Because, if you tell her that she is made, it doesn't be on the President's part; she will always abandon her accomplices or try to save herself.

The real group looking out, completely, is our political leadership.

Can't we see that an unpopular government has three main weapons: fiscal terror, access to the national treasury and guns.

The only terror we have are the kind we inflict together with the media and by talk. The access of the treasury should be defended by members of the powerful arsenal of democracy: some bad apples, gatherings, marches, a national strike; in other words, People Power is the looming threat of it.

And guns? Only the military has guns. Without, our leaders must subject themselves, but they are not only talking to do it, they are pushing the point, to consider other options. The only way to sell the idea of self-coup d'etat is by selling to the People Power.

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Crisis of conscience also drives People Power

PEOPLE HAVE SHARED THOUGHTS ON the various factors that led to the People Power Revolution in 1986 and Edsa II in 2001. Some say the loss of American support in Ferdinand Marcos was the final [one more important] straw that led to his downfall. Recall, for example, that the Americans finally asked Marcos to "resign or else."

As for Edsa II, many have also argued that it was precipitated by a crisis of confidence gripping the business and investment community. The exchange rate had slid to P54:$1, and the economy was sinking.

Marcos, Joseph Estrada, and indeed a long list of deposed leaders across the world—from Duvalier in Haiti to Fujimo-ri in Indonesia—have shown how a "crisis of confidence" can easily topple even the most entrenched autocrat.

However, there may be an even more important factor at play behind the Edsa

A soldier's testament lives on

From page A1

ness are weak, there is a tendency for the military toward "reactive militarism," especially when civilian groups seek to co-opt and challenge the role of the military establishment.

It seems we are moving toward this tendency today and for the soldier, these are bewildering times. It is a time for sobriety and restraint so as not to fuel the growing turbulence. However, it is also a time for action so this country will not be destroyed. And definitely, it is a time for soul-searching.

Balancing act

Should the military stand by the side and allow the politicians and their minions destroy the fabric of the country? Should it intervene as in 1986 and 2000? How can the Armed Forces of the Philippines balance its constitutional duty with the need for change in political leadership?

For the AFP, it is also an opportune time for introspection — to resist for having been the willing weapon of corrupt and inept civilian politicians, for having allowed itself to decay and become corrupt and for failing the people. It is an opportunity to become a real force for change, not in the extra-constitutional transfer of power from one civilian element to another but in the creation of a new moral order in politics and governance and the comprehensive transformation of Philippine society.

The AFP should play a constructive role in the present political situation. It should not stand idle as our country goes to pieces but neither does it take over government. It must be proactive by "constant involvement" to stem chaos, to deter bad government, to facilitate the peaceful transition of power and to promote good governance and democratic reform. It acts as an arbiter of the national leadership but not the leadership itself.

Fr. Carlo of Ethics states: "The AFP adheres to the principle of democracy that the government is of the people, by the people and for the people. The real power and authority in the governance of the nation emanates from its citizenry. The AFP recognizes its role to protect the people and assure its rights to participate in decision-making process in which it is legally allowed to do so, but it shall never allow itself to be used to subvert the sovereign will of the majority neither would it lend its power to stifle the rights of the minority."

By working side and linking under the veil of the law, the AFP is not acting as the true protector of the people. It is acknowledging preserving the status quo that places irresponsible and corrupt politicians into power and works against the interests of the masses, first is destroying the moral fiber of the nation that is in crippling mode the future of our country.

By breaking up legitimate expressions of dissent in protests and demonstrations, it is no more than a hired mercenary unit of the ruling elite that wants to preserve its power and of the corrupt generals who are merely using themselves at the expense of the people.

Why should the AFP perform a constructive role? First, it is a matter of duty as the protector of the people. A constructive role is within the framework of the Constitution and the Filipino people's collective prayer in the preamble to "build a just and humane society and establish a government that shall embody our ideals and aspirations, promote the common good."

The junior officers and soldiers understand this role because of their involvement in the political life of remote communities where "saints and minds" they try to win over from insurgents.

Matter of honor

Second, it is a matter of honor. The Honor Code is clear: 'An officer does not lie, cheat, steal nor tolerate those who do." The Commander in Chief is not above this code. When those any public official, she should be held accountable for violations of the code and the breach of trust placed on her by the soldiers and the people. The climax of lies and deception coming from her office both cannot clear their intent to deceive and must not be tolerated.

In the spirit of the code, the truth must come out even if it means her downfall. It is time for the AFP to use its power and influence in reminders the ideals of service and honor in the political system and in government. As a constabulary force, the Armed Forces can use its power to force her next years of unprofessional conduct. It must atone for human rights abuses against the poor and helpless. The AFP has become a disgrace to the nation and it is time to show its true worth as an army of the people, by the people and for the people.

Third, it is for the country and people. It is for the common good. The present impasse must give way to peaceful and acceptable solutions. The Armed Forces can serve to release the gridlock as the country can move on. With the Armed Forces in a neutralistic role, there will be no need for another people power that will only further demolish our democratic institutions, destroy confidence in our economy and make us the laughingstock of the world ("Oh no, not again. There goes the crazy Filipinos with their government by rabble").

The challenge for the Armed Forces today is how to act within the framework of the Constitution while facilitating needed political change, but how does the Armed Forces become a constructive force without slipping to interventionism or abusing its power? How does the Armed Forces assist in good governance and promote democracy without misusing its authority and becoming grossly like in the martial law period?

Answers would be easier if the AFP is united and is led by a discerning and morally courageous officer corps. But the officer corps is fragmented and unprofessional. There is an internal struggle between the senior officers and generals who have been co-opted by the system and the junior officers who are looking forward to change and a better Armed Forces.

Gripes and frustrations in the lower ranks had this constructive attitude but the solution is fenced by military regulations and his actions are subject to directions of the chain of command and the articles of War.

Thus, there will be risks in whatever actions the soldiers take especially since the administration and the generals will be watching and taking immediate action to clamp down on dissent.

To minimize the risks, the Armed Forces or whatever group that seeks a constructive role must be united and committed. Whatever action the soldiers take must send a clear, unequivocal message to the President and her cohol that the soldiers will no longer tolerate the present situation and she must do what is right and good for the country.

More than the Church, business or the Left, a message if from the military must still be taken seriously. Their actions should be peaceful and nonviolent. The soldiers can join peaceful marches, prayer rallies, gatherings or formations or even conduct a press conference to show their commands. They could also go to their homes or camps en masse. They are even provide protection to witnesses for them to speak up and tell the truth.

Illegitimate gov't

I have lost faith in the AFP chain of command is not in the interest of the people. All chiefs of staff from martial law, after Edsa and until today, are all guilty of corruption, one way or another. They all have skeletons in the closet and are protecting one another. Retired officers demand that these skeletons be exposed and subject to accountability.

Many of the generals are in a state of denial. I remember clearly how the generals denied "conversion" in the Senate hearing when the Feliciano Commission has already exposed it. The generals surrounding Mrs Arroyo are fully aware that there was cheating in the election. They know who is lying and who is telling the truth. They know that, by action or inaction, they are guilty of allowing electoral fraud. They are knowingly propping up an illegitimate government and have violated the Honor Code by protecting the lying and cheating the people. It is ironic that these generals are mostly Bacnotan-ites supposedly instilled with the Honor Code.

Indeed, the trouble we are experiencing today could have been prevented if the generals had the moral courage to speak up and act, or not follow illegal and improper orders.

If today, they can have the courage to speak the truth, they can help sort out this mess by exposing the Arroyo government as a fraud. It then becomes clear to the AFP what it needs to do on the basis of the Constitution. It will then be the duty of the Armed Forces to ensure a peaceful transfer of power even a means forceful eviction of GMA.

As the generals are hopeless, we then have to look to the younger generation of officers who still possess the idealism and are untainted by corruption. It is true that many in the junior ranks are in the constructive mode, but many are confused and afraid. They are disorganized but they are waiting for a credible leader. I hope that they find that leader soon.

NCOs

There is one group that should not be overlooked—the noncommissioned officer corps. They have their own chain of command and if they can be united and cohesive to follow orders, the generals would have no one to order. They can lead this constructive mode.

I saw this myself as a lieutenant when the NCOs of the First Scout Ranger Battalion rose against their corrupt and abusive commanders. The sergeant majors and first sergeants have credibility among the younger officers and the soldiers.

Sometime in late 2005, there was an attempt by a group of sergeant major to play this counterwave role by sending a letter up the chain of command denouncing the unprofessionalism and corruption in the Armed Forces and the Arroyo administration. But then Generals Eduardo Ermita and Narciso Abaya found out about it and called on the sergeant majors to stand down using subtle threats of legal action and damage to hard-earned careers.

It must be emphasized however that after a peaceful transition of power, change must go beyond the mere change of personalities. The Armed Forces should continue this constructive role by assisting in the building of democratic institutions and promoting political, economic and social reforms. Until then, the Armed Forces must play a constructive role and assist in the resolution of the problem peacefully and with the Constitution. It must be done for the sake of itself and the nation.

(The author was a 1980 graduate of the US Military Academy at West Point and a holder of an MBA from the Asian School of Business. He served in various positions in defense policy and strategy studies, was a lecturer and editor and in another research duty, before he resigned in 1998 as a captain but remained a defense consultant. He had been involved in work advocating AFP reform and good governance before he died in Indonesia on Aug. 19, 2005, at the age of 43.)

A big mistake, says JDV

By Gabriel Cardinoza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

DAGUPAN CITY — A BIG MISTAKE.

Pangasinan Rep. Jose de Venecia Jr. said he now regretted having picked then Sen. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to be his running mate in the 1998 presidential election.

Not only that. He said he now believes the late actor Fernando Poe Jr., who battled Mr Arroyo in the 2004 presidential reserves, would have made a better president.

"I made a mistake in making her my running mate. Mahalaga pagkakamali ko ng mga mistake. (The biggest mistake I've done in my life)," he told reporters on Saturday.

De Venecia and Ms Arroyo ran under the administration party Lakas-NUCD in the 1998 election. De Venecia lost to Joseph Estrada in the presidential contest but Ms Arroyo won the vice presidency.

De Venecia said he also regretted helping Ms Arroyo in the 2004 presidential election.

"Fernando Poe Jr. would have been a better president," he said.

Although Ms Arroyo lost to Poe in Pangasinan in 2004, she won in De Venecia's district by more than 60,000 votes.

Speaking at the Asian Fisheries Academy here, De Venecia said Ms Arroyo should heed the call for her to step down.

"I am now 71 and I will not allow that our country is enmeshed in bribery and scandal and corruption," he said.

With a report from Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

NEW WINE INTO NEW WINESKIN

For seven years Gloria Arroyo had warded off the stench and filth of corruption in Malacañang from dragging her down. By using her cabinet and cronies, her underlings and extensive partners, she shrewdly shifted blame and culpability away from herself. This started from Day 2 after Edsa II when she ordered her Justice Secretary to approve the Impsa Deal up to the present. Just recall those names: Nani Perez, Virgilio Angeles, Isidro Camacho, Vince Perez, Efraim Genuino, Alfredo Lonngui, Ernest Escaler, Bert Gonzales, the Brother Pidal, Mahilum and Darel, Jorjes Hofilena, Palparan, etc. And when the stink and muck threatened to drown her, there was her notorious husband who was conveniently blamed for whatever mess and scandal.

Until Ate Lourdes spilled what he knew. Then the exposed corruption revealed it began and ended in Malacañang. And Gloria Arroyo was right at the heart of the whole mess, not as ruthless bystander but as principal mover and beneficiary. From her apologists and defenders, the fence sitters and critical collaborators all realized her position had become untenable. Many are now again calling for her resignation, but beyond that the Constitution also states a President's "removal from office" (Art. VII Sec. 4).

The question however is: that begs to be answered is: Is it enough to remove the President? Edsa I and II did just that and on hindsight we realize they were failures because the two people power resulted in a better life for the elite but not for majority of our people. The spoils of our people power revolutions went to the privileged and the politicians via corruption that starts in the Executive branch with the Legislative and Judiciary as accomplices. That is why there is a great resistance of traditional politicians and government officials among our people today because corruption has made them our competitors for the country's wealth that belongs to the public.

In this light on the 22nd Anniversary of Edsa II we call on every concerned Filipino to rectify the mistakes of People Power I and II and complete the unfinished revolution of 1898. We have to start anew so that our country should belong to every Filipino not only to the filthy rich and hipon. Then we can take care of every Filipino including our OFWs who will begin to come home. More importantly the moral fabric of our society will be restored and the criminals punished. We can only do this if we set up a transition government with a transition council that has a clear program of government that is nationalist and democratic. The new leadership should be composed of men and women of integrity with a track record of genuine commitment and dedication to our people especially the poor and not of politicians who have been involved in corruption and treason against our people.

The Filipino Democratic Nationalist Reform Movement is committed to the above vision and objectives. It strongly calls on and urges ***SAVIOR JOE "ANONG" PATULAD*** to lead the said transition council. Our concerned and nationalist senior and junior officers and men in uniform are with us in making this call. Mabuhay ang Pilipinas! Mabuhay ang makabayang Pilipino!!!

FILIPINO DEMOCRATIC NATIONALIST REFORM MOVEMENT
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Edsa I rites today split people power

Front page 1

for street action.

The Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) predicted that Metro Manila would have mostly cloudy skies today—meaning the rain will be patriotically avoided—making the weather largely "conducive for walking."

Still, the cloudy skies may bring a little rain over the metropolis as it would be wise to bring umbrellas, forecaster Bobby Rivera said.

Former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, icon of the 1986 People Power revolution and an avowed enemy of immorality in government, will join Senate key NBN witness Rodolfo Noel Lozada Jr. and civil society, business, youth and other groups in a thanksgiving Mass at 5 p.m. at the Diamond Shrine of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, better known as the Redemptorist Church, in Baclaran City.

Although opposition forces are expected to show up in full force in the church, the affair will be a solemn one such as plans for a protest rally after the Mass, organizers said.

The Black and White Movement, which has rallied to the Arroyo administration, is also expected to attend.

Rallies in provinces

Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, president of the United Opposition, urged Filipinos to attend the Mass "as an expression of solidarity with the various sectors that have actively taken part in political affairs, in the face of the issues crisis besetting the nation."

Lozada's testimony at the Senate about alleged massive kickbacks in the negotiations for the now scrapped NBN project with Ossis' ZTE Corp.—supposedly involving Mr Arroyo's husband, Atty Miguel Arroyo—sparked the most dangerous political crisis to confront the administration since the "Hello, Garci" election fraud scandal three years ago.

In addition to the Metropolis march, at least 14 other cities nationwide will hold simultaneous rallies today led by the leftist Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan).

The group said the initial line of cities planning mass actions were Baguio, Cabanatuan, Legazpi, Naga, Batangas, Davo, Masbate, Vigan, Davao, Butuan, Surigao, Tacloban, Iloilo and Cagayan de Oro.

In Manila, organizers said several thousand left-wing protesters would march from the Welcome Rotonda at 2 p.m. to Mendiola Mendiola, after being denied a permit for the People Power Monument in Quezon City.

Bayan rally

"We are going to reaffirm the need for a people power as the only solution to the crisis being faced by the Arroyo presidency," said Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes Jr.

Bayan Muna Representatives Satur Ocampo and Teddy Casiño, Gabriela Representatives Liza Maza and Luz Ilagan, and Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran are expected to join today's protests.

Bayan criticized the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) for issuing restrictions against public utility vehicles for rainy protesters. The LTFRB has warned those vehicles could face fines up to P1,000 for being "out of line."

"They are targeting rally venues and public transport just so they can prevent us from peacefully expressing our sentiments," Reyes said.

Unity walks

A joint lantaga in Espana, Manila, will follow after the Bayan rally.

Around 900 policemen will guard Mendiola, said the Manila Police District director, Chief Supt. Roberto Rosales.

For its part, the Eastern Police District has placed 500 policemen on standby around the Edsa Shrine in Mandaluyong City.

Emerging from a meeting with Mr Arroyo at Camp Crame, PNP Director General Avelino Razon Jr. said he and AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. would lead the unity walk to Camp Aguinaldo.

As rumors swirled about possible defections from the police and military, Razon said the walk was meant to show that the PNP and the AFP were one in their resolve not to intervene in the political problems besetting the country. "We will show that the PNP and AFP are solid," he said.

Esperon reiterated the AFP was loyal to the Constitution and to Mr Arroyo as the Commander-in-Chief.

Same destabilizers

Mr Arroyo visited the PNP headquarters on short notice, in a closed-door meeting with Razon and Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, she was briefed on the security preparations for today's protests.

Esperon was asked on radio dzBB if the military had contingency efforts to execute soldiers to join the destabilizers attempts.

Esperon did not give a direct answer but insisted Mutual "whatever recruitment is going on" on the presumption he noted the July 2003 Oakwood mutiny the February 2006 coup plot, and the Fertilizer Manila uprising. "They're just the same group," he said.

Razon said: "Suggestions of political intervention by the police and military are totally unfounded for and is not an insult to members of the police and military or dignified professionals."

"We in the PNP will not get involved in politics, much less in political controversies," he said.

The PNP has placed its units on a nationwide heightened alert, mustering 50 percent of the police force is on standby.

The AFP is on red alert throughout the country with 2,000 troops backed by armed personnel carriers and light tanks on standby at Camp Aguinaldo. With reports from Allison W. Lopez, Marlynn C. Ortiz and Kristine L. Alave

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Noah's Ark of food built in North Pole

From page A1

Prize winning environmentalist Wangari Maathai will be among the personalities present at the inauguration of the vault, which has been carved into the permafrost of a sandstone mountain, about 1,000 kilometers from the North Pole.

The vault, made up of three spacious cold chambers each measuring 27 x 10 meters, is a long 150 feet adapted tunnel bored into the mountain's sandstone and limestone.

The vault has the capacity to hold up to 4.5 million batches of seeds from all known varieties of the planet's main food crops, making it possible to reestablish plants if they disappear from their natural environment or are obliterated by major disasters.

"The facility is built to hold razors as many varieties of agricultural crops as we think exist," explained Cary Fowley, executive director of the Global Crop Diversity Trust and project mastermind.

"It will not be filled up in our lifetime, not in my grandchildren's lifetime," Fowler said in a phone interview with Agence France-Presse.

$8.9-million project

Norway has invested the $8.9-million cost of building the vault in an Arctic archipelago of Svalbard, where seasonally

to crops grow.

Secured behind an airlock door, the three airtight chambers have the capacity to store duplicates of samples from all the world's more than 1,400 existing seed banks.

Many of the most vulnerable seed banks have begun warehousing in the "doomsday vault" collection, but some of the world's biodiversity has already disappeared, with some banks in both Iraq and Afghanistan devastated by war and a seed bank in the Philippines crushed by a typhoon.

In the time it is inaugurated on Tuesday, the Svalbard Global Seed Vault should hold some 250,000 samples, which will remain the property of their countries of origin.

Seeds closely scrutinized

Pakistan and Bosnia, which are both endangering periods of serious unrest, have seed seed collections. But samples sent from Colombia have been closely scrutinized by police to make sure the project doesn't become a vehicle for drug trafficking.

"I've been working in this field for 30 years and I thought I knew at least all the crops," Fowler said.

After receiving a list of all the different seeds in the vault, however, "I mean where there are a number of crops I've never heard of before," he said.

That's a spectacular amount of diversity for Svalbard, where no trees can grow due to the permafrost and where the nursery plummets to an average 18 degrees Celsius below zero in winter.

The seeds of wheat, maize, oats and other crops will be stored at a constant temperature of minus 18 degrees Celsius. But even if the Freezer ceases fails, the permafrost will ensure that temperatures never rise above 2.5 degrees Celsius before freezing.

Remote location

The Norwegian archipelago, which is home to some 2,200 people, was also selected as the site of the seed vault because of its remote location from civil strife.

"Svalbard really met all the criteria," Fowler said.

Protected by high walls of fortified mountain, an armored door, a series of alarms and the native polar bears that roam the region, the "doomsday vault" has been built 130 meters above current sea level—high enough that it would not flood if the Greenland ice and antarctic ice sheets melt entirely due to global warming.

The concrete cocoon has also been built to withstand nuclear missile attacks or a plunging plane, something that could come in handy in light of the 6.4-scale terrorist—the biggest earthquake in Norway's history—registered near the archipelago on Thursday. AFP

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ALBA

CHARLYN Cruz, Alitaptap storyteller, is surrounded by young listeners at the Reception and Study Center for Children.

Inquirer Read Along session . . .

From page A1

Bellot, who is about a boy who can't seem to get rid of an awful cold, and "Bonbatuba, Wahhhh!" by Ma. Corazon Sumapao, which is about a young girl who thinks the old woman next door is a witch.

"It was overwhelming because there were so many volunteers," Cruz said. "I'm happy that a lot of people, especially teenagers, shared their time with the kids."

She also noticed that the children loved being hugged. "That's why I kept on encouraging them," she said. "Any camping activity [it holds] pwede."

During the storytelling session, the children, nestled in the arms of volunteers, listened in rapt attention and looked curiously at the illustrations in the books.

Happy to volunteer

Paul Condoso, a junior at Polytechnic University of the Philippines, has been volunteering since he was a freshman.

God's Special Children also organizes "Bidyo Kuing," a 10-day summer camp for orphans and abandoned children, as well as children who are mentally challenged and differently-abled, he said.

The volunteers must first undergo training before going to camp. Each is partnered with a child, whom he is responsible for for 10 days. "We even call them amak [child]," Condoso said.

The summer camps are held outside Manila. In 1995, the camp was held in Chicago, Illinois, he said.

He ain't heavy

Condoso recalled his first time at the summer camp in Isabela. "My cousin was 10 years old, but he couldn't speak and he couldn't walk on his own. He didn't have a wheelchair, so I carried him all the time."

Condoso said he didn't mind the extra weight. "I loved the experience," he said, smiling. "And I loved the kid. I actually cried when camp was over."

God's Special Children also holds monthly outreach programs called "Operasaring Bukidnon."

After the storytelling session, the BSCC children were given coloring books and crayons, courtesy of Vibal Publishing.

Sponsors of yesterday's Inquirer Read Along were Krispy Kreme and Alitaptap Story. (ellm)

The next session is on March 8 and will feature a special light-and-shadow storytelling by the Sophia School students and alumni. It will be held at the Inquirer office on Chino Roces Avenue in Makati [illegible]

Interested parents may still allow Gilparas or Cecile de Pott at tel. 897-8808, local 329. Those interested in donating books to the program may send e-mail to inquirer.readalong@inquirer.com.ph.)

Across the NATION

DA says La Niña no cause for alarm

Diarrhea downs 178 in Eastern Samar

By Joey A. Gabieza
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—ALREADY reeling from the floods that have inundated their communities, residents of Eastern Samar now have to deal with waterborne diseases.

At least 178 persons from the flooded city and towns were reported to be suffering from diarrhea, according to reports collected by the Office of Civil Defense in Eastern Visayas (OCD-8).

The death toll has now reached 16, the OCD report released yesterday said.

Borongan City and Maydolong and Dolores municipalities posted the biggest number of fatalities with three each. Other casualties were from the towns of Jipapad, Oras, MacArthur, Taft, San Julian, all in Eastern Samar; Dulag and Palo, both in Leyte; and Calubo in Bohol.

The OCD requested the figure to climb as they continued to receive reports from affected towns, said the agency's operation chief Nivy Guano.

WIDE FIELDS in Barangay Agao, Pulangui town in Albay were flooded as rains continued pouring.

Diarrhea cases rose with floodwaters brought by relentless rain, said Guano.

Those were detected in practically all towns in Easter's Samar with Borongan having the biggest number of people hit by the water-borne disease at 39.

Also struck were Can-avid, Llorente, Guiuan, Balangkayan, and Taft, 16.

Tropical Bakiroa, regional health director, said the disease was already under control. She added immediately distributed oral rehydration solutions to the victims.

The health regional office assured its operation centers has work to immediately respond to requests of local government units.

Damage to infrastructures and agriculture throughout the region have already reached P600 million, the OCD reported.

More than 14,000 hectares of rice fields have been flooded. Eastern Samar is the hardest hit province, from the least with 9,748 hectares and P70.9 million worth of palay destroyed, the report said.

Damage to roads and bridges was placed at P650 million.

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—THE DEPARTMENT of Agriculture has allayed fears that this year's La Niña weather phenomenon would adversely affect food supply, particularly vegetable production in the Cordillera.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap's deputy Salvador Salaoop told local officials and farmers on Sunday that the DA would, in fact, view the forthcoming rainy season both as a crisis and an opportunity, depending on the crop concerned.

"It is not a cause for alarm," he said, referring to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration's (Pagasa) confirmation that the country will experience severe rainy weather conditions in the next few months.

Salaoop made the statements following the 10% increase of members, farm-to-market roads and a vegetable processing center in Barangay Ambiong.

Data from the Benguet, Ambuklao, Tublay and Kibungan towns, fourth more than P34 million, farm-to-market roads that cost P30 million, and a P1 million vegetable processing center in the municipality of Buguias have been recently completed under the North Luzon Agribusiness Quadrangle project.

Salaoop said the Cordillera, which produces 60 percent of the country's demand for vegetables, would be safe from the La Niña since the rains would hit the eastern portions of Luzon more.

The Cordillera, particularly the vegetable-producing provinces of Benguet and Mt. Province, lies in the northern portion of Luzon.

Unlike vegetables and rice, Salaoop said the coming rains would pose a threat to mango production, which is reeling from high production cost.

But some of the Cordillera would be spared from La Niña, Salaoop urged local officials to come up with strategic measures designed to cushion the weather's impact.

He cited the need to put up a good greenhouse to keep vegetable production going.

He also said all agriculture infrastructure projects must be used so those would not become idle.

The Cordillera, Salaoop noted, has become the country's vegetable capital and has remained a key player in enhancing the government's food security and poverty mitigation agenda. Delmar Cariño, Inquirer Northern Luzon

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Flood victims back to homes in 3 towns; toll now 14

LEGAZPI CITY—THREE days of calm weather have allowed the decamping of families to some towns of Albay where about 60,000 persons had evacuated due to overflowing rains, disaster officials said.

At least 94,999 people across Bicol had been moved during the past week due to rains, floods and landslides caused by the onslaught of the cold front, reports from the regional Office of the Civil Defense here showed.

A total of 18 casualties have been reported, including four who have remained missing. One of them has been identified by health officials in Alvin de los Reyes, 68, of Libmanan town in Camarines Sur, who died of a heart attack.

Missing

Dominique Jimeno, 2, and Salvador Perilla, 78, were feared to have drowned, Dominique in Lajo St. was killed in a landslide in Maddapot town; and Redcille Baeza and another unidentified victim died from hypothermia.

In Camarines Sur, Domingo Bawasad, 41, and a baby were believed to have also drowned.

Among those reported missing were Gregorio Bellen, 57, and Lourdes Bermudez.

In Tabaco City in Albay, a Tibi fisherman was reported missing.

Mayor Abelardo Antolin of Magallanes town in Sorsogon, reported to the Regional Disaster Coordinating Council on Friday that four people were killed by landslides in Barangay Imaruan, one in Bacalan and one in Tagpas.

Three were missing.

Residents identified the fatalities as Rowell, Lilian and Marlon, all unnamed Dayondayon.

Cesareo Banares, Maria Collantes, and Virginia and Bello, both unnamed Dorotea.

About 60,000 people were evacuated in Albay but in Bicol Region Domingo, Camalig and Guinobatan towns were allowed to go back to their houses on Saturday.

According to the Albay Provincial Welfare and Development Office, relief operations were still ongoing across the province.

About P1.2 million in relief goods, composed of rice rations, noodles and canfoods, were distributed on Saturday by Mandaluyong town mayor, social worker Rex Gaspeño said in a phone interview.

Landslides and floods washed out toll roads leading to Manila, isolating the area and making it accessible only by sea.

The relief goods were delivered by a ferry boat, a rented passenger boat and two inflted boats, Gaspeñoadd.

Relief

Albay Gov. Joey Salceda launched "Will Marino" on Friday and ordered the distribution of relief goods through a ferry boat.

In a report to the OCD, the Department of Public Works and Highways regional office said clearing operations were ongoing in the Gumayao and Malobago-Gumayao of the Maharlika Road.

All other national roads were passable, except for the Libon-Pantao and the Tabo-Tabo-Cagsiawlan-Mauraod roads.

In Sorsogon, the Antipolo-Campalun road and the Juban-Magallanes road were still impassable due to landslides.

In Camarines Sur, all roads were already passable, except for the Iriga-Buhi-Bula-Caramoan-Daraga road. Jaymee T. Gamil and Bobby Lalubas, Jr., quirer Southern Luzon

Water level going up in Lake Maughan

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—THE Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council (PDCC) of South Cotabato has warned of a possible calamity as the water level in Lake Maughan in T'boli town continued to rise.

In 1995, almost 10 people were killed, and farms and property damaged while thousands were displaced in South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat and Maguindanao—areas the lake's waters overflowed.

In March 2006, flash floods surveyed when Maughan's waters spilled due to heavy rains.

Maughan is the water filled crater of Mt. Parker, a dormant volcano.

John Lorin, PDCC coordinating coordinator, said the rise in the lake's water level was measured starting Feb. 14 due to continuous rains.

Lorin said the local government discovered the alarming increase during a clean-up drive. Those who participated also reported a landslide in the lake's wall, he said.

Loose soil

"The soil around the lake probably loosened up," Lorin said, adding that part of the wall might collapse.

Today, a composite team from the PDCC, National Irrigation Administration, Mines and Geosciences Bureau and other agencies, will trek to Parker to assess the situation.

In Koronadal City, the heavy rains experienced since last week triggered a landslide, which killed a 67-year-old woman on Thursday.

Jane Cabacan, city social welfare chief, said Brgy. Gasang of Barangay Datal Bia, flang died when loose soil buried her house and store cabin here.

The rush rain hours he nearer permitted to retrieve the remains of Gasang due to the huge volume of soil," Cabacan said.

She said authorities had warned residents in store to only grounds as the rains continued. Agaton Z. Zonio and Edwin O. Bermudez, Inquirer Mindanao

Toxic wastes, war games anger peacemakers

MAHALACAT, PAMPANGA—MEMBERS of the US-based Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) have expressed outrage over the American government's control and use of the Philippines as a site for military exercises even as it failed to clean up contaminated areas in two of its former bases.

CPT delegates saw what they called "continuing military contamination" as they visited the former Clark Air Base and Subic Naval Base on the first week of the Balikatan, the biggest of 20 or so exercises that resumed in 1999 under the Philippines-US Visiting Forces Agreement.

Clark in Pampanga and Subic, and Subic in Bataan and Zambales had since been converted by the Philippine government into economic free ports after the Philippine Senate ordered the closure of the military facilities in 1991.

Clearly, US military contamination of the Philippines continues today in spite of the base closings. We humbly oppose the continued use of the Philippines for the military-US-led war on terror," the CPT said in a solidarity message at the close of a two-day immersion with toxic waste victims in communities around Clark on Friday.

The visit came a year after Gene Bunlao, founder of the CPT, stayed around Clark and Subic for a month.

"US President George W. Bush has said that the US military must be ready to strike at a moment's notice in any dark corner of the world. Mr. Christian Peacemaker Teams in the Philippines is not a 'dark corner' but a beacon of light, of hope, of love and of peace," it said.

The CPT is involved in programs working to reduce violence through peacemaking based on the teachings of the Bible, nonviolent direct action and joining local peacemakers to reinforce work in Palestine, Colombia, Iraq and indigenous communities around the world.

In Richard Williams, a noted economist who assisted then Sen. Wigberto Tañada in proposing a base conversion program, said the American government "ought to be required to do a cleanup job before it is allowed to use the bases again."

"It is too bad that the military exercises are allowed. Our government will back off when there's pressure from the people and the eyes of the world are upon it," said Williams, who was involved in the closure and redevelopment of the Luzon Naval Base in Cavite.

Rev. Steve Suitts, executive director of the Southern Regional Council in Atlanta, Georgia, said the CPT would help press for a cleanup and demand for a stop to the war games.

"We must be USth with them," Suitts said. "Vietnam [War]. The reason for Subic Bay was the Cold War. Those were for America are over but the killings and environmental problems continue and we are watching that we need to be responsible and aware so that kind of situation as well," he said.

One of the things that we find that we are doing here is letting people know that the story will not stay silent, the voices of the people will be heard."

In replies to Philippine inquiries, the US government had refused to do environmental remediation that was not in accordance with defunct 1947 Military Bases Agreement.

Molly Baldonado, executive director of the People's Task Force for Bases Cleanup, said a "huge body of evidence of contamination" was found at Clark and Subic.

The US General Accounting Office (GAO), the investigative arm of the US Congress, US Department of Defense and the Veterans International environmental study confirmed that, she said.

The Department of Health confirmed the high levels of lead and arsenic in the blood of several Mt. Pinatubo evacuees who were sheltered at the Clark Air Base Command, a former motor pool of the US Air Force.

The Weston study found at least one pollutant exceeding drinking water standards in 11 of 29 locations in Clark. Twelve of 14 sites had pollutants beyond normal standards. Rosella Ocejo, Inquirer General Luzon

DESPITE the best of the can, American and Filipino soldiers build a school at Mabayang, North Cotabato.

Rise in RP dengue cases worries top WHO official

BAGUIO CITY—A TOP OFFICIAL OF THE World Health Organization has expressed apprehension over the increasing number of dengue cases in the country in the last two months.

Dr. Sue Nesse C. WHO representative to the Philippines, told reporters here on Wednesday that health officials and communities had to win the war against dengue, especially now that the mosquito-borne illness has become a year-round occurrence.

"We are a bit worried because January [and] February are usually dry season months, and normally, during the dry season, dengue cases go down. But I've seen the rest, [the number of] cases are still going up in Metro Manila and in other areas," he said.

In Pampanga, Dr. Eric Tayag, director of the Department of Health's National Epidemiology Center, said dengue cases in the Philippines were on an all-time high in 2007, with 41,310 incidents.

While the 2007 figures were the highest on record since 1992, the number of deaths that year, 456, was lower than the 1998 record of 1.14. Tayag said at the start of a two-day summit on the anti-dengue campaign in Central Luzon on Thursday.

The DOH reported that 928 dengue cases were recorded in 19 hospitals in Metro Manila last month. Manila had the highest incidence rate, with 204 cases, followed by Quezon City with 137, Caloocan City, 112; and Pasay City, 92.

A total of 262 cases and 10 deaths had also been reported in Cebu City from Jan. 1 to Feb. 13, DOH records showed.

Wong S. who was assigned to the country's top post, met with Dagupan Mayor Alipio Fernandez Jr. and local health officials to learn about health issues in Pangasinan.

Cycle

"I want to be that the dengue cycle was an very three years: first now, [it is] not anymore one in five cases of the Philippines," he said. "Every year, [dengue] cases are rising and rising so, we have to mainstream [community] enrolment as well as community should be prepared to collaborate with the DOH to fight dengue, to making a preventive control effort really beneficial to the population."

Last month, Health Secretary Francisco Duque III launched "To DOH Labat, to Dengue," a national anti-dengue campaign.

In Pampanga, Tayag noted a rise in the number of documented cases as the DOH monitored its weekly rates from 180 in 1998 to 263 in 2007.

Also, the dengue situation in the country has become "hyper endemic," meaning four types of virus strains have been plaguing the communities since 2000.

At least 60 percent of the patients suffered hemorrhagic fever, Tayag said, citing more deaths among children.

The worst incidents were higher in Central Luzon, Central Visayas, Zamboanga peninsula and Metro Manila, he said.

Central Luzon has been on "alert threshold" as dengue cases from January to Feb. 9 reached 729—a almost triple of the 257 cases in 2007. Of the 16 provinces, DOH regional director said. Three were especially higher in Bataan, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac and Pampanga.

"We are a problem like year because of the extended La Niña," Tayag said, referring to months of more rains. Females dengue bring mosquitoes that carry the virus breed on clean water.

Disconnect

Asked why the problem has not been licked since battering dengue fever has been discovered in the country in 1956, Tayag said: "Dengue is an environmental problem."

As such, he said, the DOH had always focused to interventions on health measures in the communities. But he saw a "disconnect" in that regard. Village-level campaigns had always failed to exterminate adult mosquitoes rather than go for the eggs and larvae.

"A real, good campaign starts within one's home," Tayag said.

Dr. Shelyn Jean Uhiad, DOH coordinator for Mindanao, appealed to the public to control and prevent mosquito problems to help in the fight against dengue.

"Frogs, lizards and spiders prey on mosquitoes and there's a need to preserve these creatures to help us control this health menace to humans," Uhiad said. Gabriel Cardenosa, Inquirer Northern Luzon, Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon, Charlie C. Inbaan, Inquirer Mindanao

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Qualifications Criteria

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- Entrepreneurs with less than one year business track record - grace rate start ups are not rated financial through data.
- Large enterprises with asset size of more than P1,000 million – They are not within SBC's mandate.
- Enterprises with loan requirement of more than P10.0 million – They are considered borrower and will be endorsed to SBC's partner banks.
- Enterprises with asset size of less than P500.0 thousand and/or with loan requirement of less than P100.0 thousand – They will be endorsed to partnership microfinance institutions.
- Entrepreneurs that are already bankable who are able to easily approach the banking sector for financing – SBC is not the best source for them in terms of pricing vis-à-vis options in the market.

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While official endorsements is optional, the following sectors are encouraged to endorse MSME borrowers under this program:

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- Market fairs – in favor of operators
- Local government units – in favor of local entrepreneurs

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Woman trader killed, robbed of ₱225,000

Cops say robbers knew victim's routine

By Marlon Ramos

AN UNIDENTIFIED BODY KILLED and robbed a businesswoman just a few minutes away from her home in Bonakhon, Quezon City, on Saturday night, police said yesterday.

A report from the Quezon City Police District identified the victim as Armelita Ramos, 59, a resident of Ramos Compound, Barangay Quirino. She died of two gunshot wounds in the chest.

The police said there was two men involved in the attack on Ramos. One of them robbed her and took a bet bag, which contained P225,000 in cash. The other drove the getaway vehicle, a tricycle which sped off toward Barangay Mendiola Proper afterward.

According to the police report, Ramos had just stepped out of her house and was walking in a dimly lit alley at 10:20 p.m. Saturday when the robber approached her, shot her and then grabbed her bag.

"The [gunman] again shot the victim in the chest when she tried to fight back," it added.

SPO2 Edward Santillo, case investigator, said the robbers obviously knew the businesswoman's routine. Ramos' relatives told the police that she usually left their house at around 10 p.m. every day to buy from a Divisoria Market.

The businesswoman owned several fruit stands at the Bonakhon Public Market.

DID YOU KNOW

SIX OF THE 10 most populous cities in the Philippines (based on the latest census) are in Metro Manila. Topping the list is Quezon City with 2.2 million residents, followed by Manila and Caloocan, with 1.6 million and 1.2 million residents, respectively.

Ranking seventh to ninth are the cities of Pasig (505,000), Valenzuela (500,000) and Las Piñas (472,000). Other cities in the top 10 are Davao (1.1 million), Cebu (718,000), Zamboanga (600,000) and Antipolo (431,000).

Cyrill L. Zacarias, Inquirer Research

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NO LIGHTS, OPEN CANAL NEAR LRT SANTOLAN

From Paulino Cruz, 58, Pasig City: "To Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair (and possibly the next president) of the Philippines) Bayani Fernando: Please install railings and lights at the LRT Santolan Station. There's an open canal on both sides of the walkway coming from the station. Many children who beg for food and money stay in this area, and I am afraid that if there are no safety measures in place, someone might fall into the waterway. Please do something about this. Thanks."

Citizen's call

More toilets for Naia

I'D RATHER bypass international airport officials: Leave your comfort zones and take a walk around the aerodromes' parking lot. Please renovate this area and add more toilets! Maawa at maitindi naman kayo kay Juan de la Cruz. It has pity on Juan de la Cruz!

–JUANCHO JESE, Al, Cainta

What a waste of water!

SA KANTO ng P. Florentino Street dito sa Sampaloc, umaagaw-pansin ang isang kalsada na tapon ng tubig-ulan. Mukang isinara at abandonado na rin ang kalsadang ito dahil wala nang maayos. Pero dahil sarado ito at nasa gitna ng P. Florentino Street sa Sampaloc, water continues to flood the street. It is a big inconvenience to passersby apart from the fact that it could cause accident because of the slippery pavement. Authorities concerned should check this out. Thank you!

–ANABEL JO. Alpuerto, Sampaloc, Manila

Dark and dangerous

A POINT SEE at Rizal Avenue between Recto and Dorotea Jose Streets has become problematic since all night because of the absence of street lights. There is also an old cinema house that has been burned in so patients are have no choice but to walk on the street instead of the sidewalk. The sidewalk in front of Fullman on Rizal Avenue, likewise, is a pickup point for prostitutes who ply their trade nightly. Calling on police and local government officials!

–JOSE TAMS, Zt. Sta Cruz, Manila

Caloocan potholes here to stay?

TRAVELING to and from Caloocan City has become a constant headache. The whole stretch of C3 road going to Rizal Avenue is full of potholes. Mayor Echiverri's boys keep putting stones and sand to fill up the holes but we all know this is just a temporary remedy. As a result, motorists drive at a snail's pace because they are careful not to damage their vehicles. Also, jeepney drivers on A. Mabini Street stop anytime and anywhere to pick up passengers, causing traffic jams even during early mornings! What does the government do with the taxes we pay religiously?

–LYDIA DALUMATIZ, Zt. Caloocan City

Manila gov't opens 6 'mini city halls'

By Tina G. Santos

THE MANILA CITY GOVERNMENT HAS opened satellite offices in each of its six districts to speed up the delivery of basic services to residents.

Dubbed as "mini city halls," the satellite offices are located in the Tondo Sports Complex (District 1), Tayuman Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) office (District 2), Sauar Sport Complex office at the corner of Avenida Arroyo and Abenoy Streets in Sta. Cruz (District 3), Dagohoy Sports Complex (District 4), on Angeles corner Roxas Boulevard (District 5), and on Teresa Street, Sta. Mesa (District 6).

Mayor Alfredo Lim has appointed City Administrator Jesus Mel Mislan to oversee the operations of the satellite offices which, he explained, will serve as extensions of City Hall.

Among the services offered by the mini city halls are the processing of applications for police clearances; senior citizens identification cards; health certificates; livelihood programs and business permits.

They will also provide burial assistance to the city government-run North and South cemeteries and referral letters to people who want to ask for help from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office and the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.

"With the establishment of these satellite offices, we hope to deliver speedy and efficient services to the residents' doorstep," Lim said.

Hunt on for taxi driver in rape try

By Marlon Ramos

THE POLICE ARE LOOKING FOR A DRIVER who allegedly tried to rape a 27-year-old woman inside his taxi on Saturday night.

Supt. Rogelio Cabrera, Quezon City police District Station 10 commander, said he has alerted all police mobile units to look for the driver of a van with license plate PWL 471.

In a report, Cabrera said the victim went to their office to file a complaint against the still unidentified driver whom she accused of molesting her.

The victim told police investigators that she boarded a Cubao-bound AUV taxi on Mindanao Avenue at around 8 p.m. Saturday.

After a few minutes, all the passengers, except the last, alighted from the taxi upon reaching the Metro Rail Transit station in Kamuning.

The victim, who was in the back seat, said the driver asked her to sit beside him," Cabrera's report said.

When she did so, the victim said the driver took out a knife, pointed it at her and started to touch her breasts.

The woman said she told the man that she would go with him to a hotel if they would not hurt or stab her but he did not respond.

While inside the restroom, the victim quickly asked the security guard for help but the driver managed to run back to his van and escaped.

Cabrera said they believe that the driver had victimized other women before. He said they have asked the Land Transportation Office to help them locate the owner of the vehicle.

Woman in motel fire burned alive

By Tina G. Santos

THE WOMAN WHO WAS FOUND DEAD inside a motel in Sta. Cruz, Manila, early Friday morning was still alive when the was set on fire, a police official said.

Autopsy report showed that her lungs were filled with smoke, indicating that she died of suffocation," Chief Insp. Dominador Arevalo, head of the Manila Police District homicide division, told the reporters the other day.

Arevalo and City Fire Marshal Senior Supt. Ariolito Coronel earlier said that the man the victim was with allegedly tried to burn her body "to cover up another crime."

Arevalo said they were looking for witnesses to provide them with information that could lead to the identification and arrest of the woman's companion.

Police have yet to identify the victim whose body was burned beyond recognition. Her body was discovered after some employees of Seven Hotel at the corner of Rizal Avenue and C.M. Recto in Sta. Cruz, Manila, noticed thick smoke coming out of Room 306, prompting someone to finally open the door.

Hotel personnel, who could not contain the fire, initially thought that the room was vacant until they discovered the victim's body.

A lighter and a broken piece of ceramic toilet flush tank cover, which could have been used to hit the victim, were found at the crime scene, authorities said.

The victim, who was about 160 to 65 years old, is believed to be with a total of around 5-p.m. Thursday according to motel employees.

The man was described as around 30 to 35 years old, 5'5" or 5'6" in height and clad in a gray shirt.

US says 'virtual fence' on border ready for use

After the war, a new battle to become citizens

NEW YORK—DESPITE A 2002 promise from President George W. Bush to put citizenship applications for immigrant members of the military on a fast track, some are finding themselves waiting months, or even years, for the issuance of the naturalistic bankings. One, Sgt. Kendell K. Frederick of the Army who had tried three times to file his citizenship, was killed by a roadside bomb in Iraq as he was unable to become a citizen before leaving the country for his application.

About 7,200 service members or people who have been recently discharged have citizenship applications pending, but neither the Department of Defense nor Citizenship and Immigration Services keeps track of how long they have been waiting. Immigration lawyers and politicians say they have received a significant number of complaints about delays because of background checks, misplaced paperwork, confusion about deployments and other problems.

The long waits are part of a broader problem plaguing the immigration service, which was flooded with 2.5 million applications for citizenship and visas last summer—twice as many as the previous year—in the face of 96 percent fee increases that took effect July 30. Officials have estimated that it will take an average of 18 months to process citizenship applications from legal immigrants through 2010, up from seven months last year.

But service members and veterans are supposed to go to the head of the line. After the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, President Bush signed an executive order allowing noncitizens who serve on active duty to file for citizenship right away, instead of having to first complete three years in the military.

At the same time, post-Sept. 11 security measures, including tougher guidelines for background checks that are part of the naturalization process, have slowed things down.

The FBI, which checks the names of citizenship applicants against those in its files, has been overwhelmed, handling an average of 96,000 name checks requests a week.

Many soldiers clear the checks within 30 to 60 days, or 60 to 90 days," said Leslie R. Lord, the Army's liaison to Citizenship and Immigration Services.

AFP

YOU KNOW WHO DREW THIS!

A cartoon of Disney character Dopey, from the film's tale Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, which William Hoinsag, director of war museum in Norway, believes was drawn by Adolf Hitler during World War II, is seen in this undated photo. There was no independent confirmation that the drawing was the work of the Nazi leader, who tried to evade sibling to an artist before going into politics. Reuter

WORLDBRIEFS

Sarkozy accused over constitutional court move

PARIS – French President Nicolas Sarkozy faced accusations on Saturday of trying to subvert the authority of France's top constitutional body over a law to incarcerate dangerous criminals indefinitely. The controversy arose after the Constitutional Council set restrictions on a law passed by parliament earlier this month to keep violent offenders in jail after their sentences expire if they were still deemed to pose a public menace. On Friday, Sarkozy directed France's top magistrate to look at ways of implementing the law, despite the council's ruling, prompting accusations that he was trying to challenge the authority of a body that has final say over whether legislation is constitutional or not. "If the president wants to get past a decision of the council, there is one clear way: Ask parliament to change the constitution," Robert Badinter, a former justice minister and president of the Constitutional Council said in La Monde. The law, which applies to violent offenders serving sentences of at least 15 years, was approved in principle by the council but it said offenders currently serving or who were sentenced before the law was passed should not be affected.

Reuter

Serbia seeks rioters who torched US Embassy

PRISTINA, Serbia—Serbia's top state prosecutor said on Saturday that the authorities were hunting for the rioters who attacked the US Embassy and other diplomatic missions this week. "We are collecting evidence and are identifying the culprits," the official Srebrenian Radiotelevizija said in a statement. The police said they had arrested nearly 200 rioters involved in Thursday's protests, in which demonstrators, outraged at US support for an independent Kosovo, stormed the US Embassy in Belgrade and set part of it on fire. It was the worst violence to engulf the capital since pro-democracy demonstrators overthrew Slobodan Milosevic eight years ago. The missions of Britain, Germany, Croatia and Turkey also were attacked, while rioters went on a rampage across the Serbian capital. 93 officials said non-essential personnel from the missions had been evacuated. One person died and 130 were injured. For the past six days, Serbian demonstrators across Serbia and Kosovo in an emotional and sometimes violent outpouring of anger at what many regard as the theft, sanctioned by the West, of their medieval heartland.

AFP

Israeli missile strike kills 3 in Gaza

JERUSALEM—Three Palestinians were killed in an Israeli army missile strike in the northern Gaza Strip on Saturday afternoon, Palestinian medical officials said. It was not immediately clear whether those killed were civilians or combatants. Local witnesses said the three were riding motorbikes, drinking tea and smoking, in an area east of Beit Hanun, near the border with Israel, when they were killed. No militant group immediately claimed them as members. The three were all men in their 20s, according to a Palestinian medical official. But an Israeli army spokesperson said ground forces had attacked a squad that was on its way to fire mortar shells at Israel. "According to our information, those who were killed were armed men," the spokesperson said.

AFP

WASHINGTON—A HIGH-TECH "virtual fence" on part of the US border with Mexico is finally ready for service and the technology can fight illegal crossings all along the frontier, the US Homeland Security chief said on Friday.

Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff made the announcement during a review of border-control efforts, at which officials also unveiled higher fines for employers who hire illegal immigrants.

Immigration, a highly charged political issue, has been at the forefront in this presidential election year. Republicans from senator Sen. John McCain of Arizona to fighting conservative critics he has been too soft on illegal immigration, and Democrats including Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama accuse the Bush administration of heavy-handed tactics.

The so-called Project 28 "virtual fence" was built near Nogales, Arizona, by Boeing Co, covering a 45-kilometer stretch of the border. The $20 million project of sensor towers and advanced mobile communications was supposed to be completed by mid-2007 but was delayed by software problems, drawing congressional criticism that continued on Friday.

"I have personally witnessed the value of this system, and I have spoken directly to the Border Patrol agents ... who have seen it produce actual results, in terms of identifying and allowing the apprehension of people who were illegally smuggling across the border," Chertoff said.

Chertoff and Obama suggested in a debate on Thursday that high-tech surveillance could lessen the need for a planned 1,120-km border fence that has drawn opposition along its route.

Chertoff indicated the physical fence plans would not change, but said advanced technology would be deployed along much of the border.

The Homeland Security Secretary said it is acquiring a fourth unmanned aerial vehicle for patrols and plans to get two more, he said. It also plans to increase the number of ground-based mobile radar surveillance systems to 40 this year, from six.

"In some form or fashion, technology is going to be virtually every place on the border," he said. "It's not necessarily going to be in the configuration of 9/28," Chertoff said.

President George W. Bush asked Congress this month for $775 million to build more fencing along the southern border and install high-tech surveillance equipment and other infrastructure.

Rep. Bennie Thompson, a Mississippi Democrat who heads the House of Representatives Homeland Security committee, said the virtual fence project relied too much on contractors and that Border Patrol agents were blocked from pointing out "obvious flaws," impairing performance.

"I would hope that they [Homeland Security officials] have learned from these mistakes," he said.

Reuters

STATEMENT FROM THE JEEPNEY SECTOR

May humihiling na mag-resign si PGMA ngunit kung siya ay tatanggalin, nakakasigurado ba tayo na ang papalit ay mas magaling?

May nagsasabi na si PGMA ay corrupt. Hindi kami naniniwala dito! Ngunit baka ang mga nais na pumalit sa kanya ang corrupt? Kung hindi man junta o mga komunista.

Ang nasisigurado lang po namin ay walang Presidente maliban kay PGMA na may simpatiya at tunay na tumutulong sa hanay ng transportasyon. Siya lang ang Presidente na may paninindigan na kalabanin ang kolorum at kotong. Siya lang ang nagbigay ng tulong sa mga drayber hinggil sa kalusugan at pagkain. Siya lang ang Presidente na tumutugon sa mga pangangailangan ng hanay ng transportasyon.

Marami pa poong problema ang mga drayber at operator, gaya ng sapilitang pagbabayad ng LGU terminal fees, at patuloy na ginagawang gatasan ng mg LGU ang mga drayber at operator.

Sinimulan na po ni PGMA ang proseso ng pagbabago. Kung siya ay matatanggal, maaantala na naman ang mga proyekto at programa na makakatulong sa pag-angat ng kabuhayan ng mga operator at drayber.

Dapat lang kasuhan at tanggalin sa puwesto ang mga opisyal na mapapatunayan na corrupt pero ito ay dapat idaan sa tamang proseso.

Ang aming apela ay tama na ang pulitika, tumutok na sa ekonomiya.

JENALISA MARANAN
National President
FEJODAP

MELENCIO "BOY" VARGAS
National President
ALTODAP

ROBERTO "Ka Obet" MARTIN
National President
PAGKAKAISA NG MASDA

ORLANDO MARQUEZ
Chairman

JESSE DE LUNA
National President
PCDO ACTO

MANUEL DURAN
National President
NTU

VIGOR D. MENDOZA II
Chairman
LTFRB

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Ibarra

'Shame on you,' Clinton tells Obama

CINCINNATI—HILLARY CLINTON SLAMMED rival Barack Obama on Saturday for campaign leaflets on her health-care plan that she called "blatantly false" and accused him of using Republican tactics in their contest for the Democratic US presidential nomination.

In a bitter exchange, Obama defended the leaflet as accurate and campaign spokesperson Bill Burton denied Clinton's "negative campaign."

"Shame on you, Barack Obama," Clinton said, speaking to reporters after a rally in Ohio, a state that is key to her struggling campaign.

Brandishing a copy of the leaflet, Clinton said the Obama campaign was spreading "false, misleading, disoriented information" about her health-care plan.

"Senator Obama knows it is not true that my plan forces people to buy insurance even if they can't afford it," Clinton said. "It is blatantly false and yet his campaign is spend millions of dollars perpetuating falsehoods. It is not helpful.

It is destructive, particularly for a Democrat to be discussing universal health care."

Obama said the content of the leaflet was correct. He said he was puzzled by the sudden "change in tone" by his rival because the leaflets Clinton referred to were sent out days or weeks ago. He suggested there was something "tactical" about her attacks now.

"The notion that somehow we're engaging in television unless I climb a pretty hard to swallow," he told reporters.

"There's nothing in there that's factually inaccurate."

Obama, has won 10 consecutive state nominating contests since Feb. 5. The taking of votes has put him ahead in the race for delegates to a nominating convention this summer where the party will pick a candidate for the November election. At 10:30 each morning, he would be the first black US president.

Many analysts say Clinton must win victories in the delegate-rich states of Ohio and Texas on March 4 to cut Obama's lead and still have a chance at the nomination. A New York senator and former first lady, she would be the first woman president.

Campaigning in Ohio, Obama told a townhall on health care at a hospital in Columbus that his health care plan would cut medical costs more than hers. He also touched on the issue that Clinton had consplained about.

"The main difference her, went on to that Senator Clinton includes a mandate, which means she'd have the government force you to buy health insurance, and she said that she'd consider 'going after' your wages if you don't," Obama said, adding that he disagreed with that approach.

Meanwhile, Clinton said the campaign leaflet on health care reminded her of health insurance industry attacks on her plan.

She also said another leaflet Obama's campaign issued misrepresented her views on trade agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement, or Nafta.

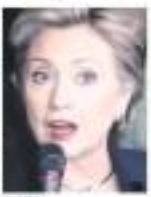
"Let's have a real campaign, through with the speeches and big rallies and then using tactics that are right out of Karl Rove's playbook," she said, referring to the Republican political strategist behind George W. Bush's winning presidential campaigns.

Obama, speaking to reporters, acknowledged that on the Nafta matter, a story using the word "boost" to describe her feelings about the trade accord with Mexico and Canada had been amended after the readers were sent out.

But as a rally Saturday evening in Akron, Ohio, Obama tipped into Clinton for switching positions on Nafta, asked for said she had backed as a success of her husband, President Bill Clinton's administration.

"You can't be for something or take credit for an administration when you spent 35 years of experience and three videos you run for president suggest somehow that you didn't really mean what you said back then. It doesn't work that way," he said.

Reuters



CLINTON AP

NYT ombudsman slams article on McCain

WASHINGTON—THE NEW York Times' ombudsman strongly criticized the newspaper's insinuation this week that White House hopeful John McCain had a tryst with a female lobbyist 21 years his junior, nearly 14 years ago.

"The newspaper should itself to the uncomfortable question of being the story so much as publishing the story in large part because, although it raised one of the most sexist subjects in politics—sex—it offered readers no ground that McCain and (Vicki) Iseman had a romance," public editor Clark Hoyte wrote in the Times' online edition.

In an article signed by four reporters that raised more backlash against the daily from the candidate, the Times Thursday cited unnamed McCain advisers who, "convinced the relationship had become romantic," had asked Iseman to keep away from the senator.

"The article was notable for what it did not say," wrote Hoyte in his column to be published Sunday. "It did not say what convinced the advisers that there was a romance."

"It did not make clear what McCain was attempting when he acknowledged behaving inappropriately—an affair or just an association with a lobbyist that could look bad," he said of alleged comments Mc-Cain made to his advisers.

Hoyt also criticized Times executive editor Bill Keller's explanation that the article's main thrust was not the alleged affair but the political forces the Republican believes the candidate, the Times Thursday cited unnamed McCain advisers who, "convinced the relationship had become romantic," had asked Iseman to keep away from the senator.

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Reuters

'Hijab problem' sparks police standoff in Tehran

By Fredrik Dahl

TEHRAN—WEARING LABORATORY COLORED headscarf and high-heeled boots, the woman refused to be bundled into the police van without a fight.

Protesting loudly and even trying to escape, her standoff with Iranian police cracking down on women violating the Islamic dress code lasted several minutes.

But the outcome of the drama shortly after dusk on a cold winter's day on Tehran's most famous boulevard was never in doubt.

Two female police officers in head-to-toe black chadors pushed her into the white vehicle which then drove off into the hustle of rush-hour traffic on Azeri Avenue.

"Hijab problem," one male onlooker said, referring to the clothes women must wear in Iran to cover their hair and disguise the shape of their bodies to conform with Iran's Islamic laws.

Based in Tehran for the past year, I have often written about police detaining women who challenge the dress code that bans bare more strictly enforced under President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

But this was the first time I saw it happening.

The judge by the passers-by who stopped in the late-night on the street pavement, or the people peeping out through the windows of the neighborhood grocery store where I was buying milk, my curiosity was shared.

The dark-haired woman, who appeared to be in her 30s, argued in a high-pitched voice with a burly bearded male police officer towering over her in his green uniform.

When his female colleague put a hand on the woman's shoulder to lead her into the van, she angrily pushed it away and shouted. Then suddenly she turned and tried to run away.

She did not get far. The two female officers grabbed her and shoved her into the police vehicle. The door was shattered shut and the van disappeared into Tehran's evening rush hour.

"Not good," a fellow shopper told me in halting English, shaking his head to disapprove of the police action.

Thousands of women have been hauled in or warned by police in the 10 months since the authorities launched one of the strictest campaigns in recent years.

AN IRANIAN woman smokes a cigarette as she rests in a coffee shop in Tehran in this April 18, 2006, photo. AP/File

In addition to the annual summer crackdown, when sweltering heat prompts some women to shed clothing, police in December announced a drive against women flashing some hair or immodest, such as tight trousers hacked into long boots.

Iran's clerical leaders say Islamic unity helps prevent women against the sex gaze and arouse they have in the West.

But young women in wealthier urban areas often defy the restrictions by wearing tight clothing and colorful headscarves that barely cover their hair. The rulers are less commonly flouted in poor suburbs and rural regions.

Form more with spilled Internet-themed (or "Western" are being targeted by the authorities in the latest clampdown.

One Iranian woman in her early 40s told me later the campaign had persuaded her to dress more conservatively, but younger women "are not worried anymore."

Those found dressing inappropriately may be warned or, if they are repeat offenders, can spend the night in a police station and may also be fined.

Reuters

WHAT'S INSIDE
- Manotoc stars as Canlubang triumphs /A28

SPORTS

Editor Teddyboy S. Melendres Assistant Editor Frances T. J. Ochoa

NO SUGAR. NO CARBS. 30g of WHEY PROTEIN
PROTEIN UNLIMITED
The REAL way to LOSE WEIGHT

Realtors move within win of title

Pardo quits ethics body over 'unethical' meeting

By Marvyng R. Castillo

THIS ONE LOOKED EASY FOR Sta. Lucia in the second half.

The Realtors rebounded from a slow start and then went down a crippled Purefoods crew last night, scoring an 88-76 decision to take a 3-2 series lead in the the Inaur PBA Philippine Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

Sta. Lucia roared on 33-point second quarter deficit and then zoomed ahead by 18 early in the fourth period before holding off a mild uprising by the Giants in more to within a setout the first all-Filipino title in franchise history.

The normally brash Sta. Lucia coach Bayo Fernandez, however, held off any predictions.

"No comment," Fernandez said, when asked if he would again declare the series cure, leaving a razor-to-love advantage over the Giants. Fernandez pulled off the same gambling earlier 3-2 lead over Alaska in the semifinal series.

The Realtors seemed to center in each of their three wins in this series, but this one seemed the easiest by far considering Purefoods checked into the match giving the Realtors a freebie. Top scorer Jason Hp missed the game to serve a suspension.

Meanwhile, finished with 20 points but couldn't keep a basket in the middle periods, while Simon, the "marksmen" offender missed all the breaks for the Giants, didn't have the magic this time and was held to a conference low three rainbows.

"Playing without Jayson Hp is like wearing a rainbow with one leg," said Purefoods coach Ryan Gregorio.

Hp's suspension had a ripple effect that crept into the board of governors. Early in the day, Purefoods representative Bert Pardo resigned from the league's ethics committee over what he called an "unethical" meeting between commissioner Sonny Barrios and Sta. Lucia team owner Ramgrid Bobbo just before Hp's suspension was handed down.

Sense of propriety

"I don't see the sense of propriety in the commissioner for doing that," Pardo told the reporters in a lengthy phone call. "I don't care what they talked about or what they had for lunch, but the fact that he was there leaves a bad taste in the mouth.

"If it was official (PBA) business, the commissioner should have scheduled a meeting at the (PBA) office, and other his decision had come out."

Barrios, though, maintained that there was nothing unethical about the meeting.

"Mr. Bobbo is a team owner and can talk to me anytime, anywhere," said Barrios. "That's why we held the meeting at a very public place, in a very visible hotel, and to be fair to Mr. Bobbo, he did not court any pressure on me, whatsoever."

Kelly Williams finished with 20 points, 16 rebounds and two blocks to lead the Realtors.

Paolo Mendoza stepped up in the absence of Joseph Yeo, who also served out a one-game suspension, as his nine points in the first three periods.

"We are not looking at Game 7 at the moment," Gregorio continued. "Because there will be no Game 7 if we don't survive Wednesday."

STA. LUCIA back-up guard Dennis Miranda tries to pass via a rainmaker after finding his path to the basket cut off by the defense of Purefoods center Kerby Raymundo. The Realtors took a crucial 3-2 lead in the best-of-seven series with a Game 5 triumph over the Giants last night. Sta. Lucia will go for its first All-Filipino crown on Wednesday at the Araneta Coliseum.

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Manotoc stars as Canlubang triumphs

By Ernesto R. Gonzales

BACOLOD—TOMMY MANOTOC CAME BACK FROM THE 16-boundary of a three-over 142 to his storied career last year, scoring a 3-over-coming 33 points yesterday to power Canlubang to a third straight PAL Interclub Senior championship pulling away at the Negros Occidental Golf and Country Club course here.

Although he started with a double bogey, the 59-year-old Manotoc still finished with a round score of one-over par 73 on a Hungarian scoring wonderful-dexterity difficult by a steady double bogey throughout the final round.

That final-round effort gave him a fourth individual title in the 10-year-old division.

Ding Borlaza and Lino Magpayo Jr. finished Manotoc with identical 474 as Canlubang posted its big goal winning margin of 20 points with a 564 total and set itself up for its 4th-round 3-peat straight Interclub championship overall.

Manotoc, who was disqualified after carding a score-high 55 points for signing the wrong scorecard last year in Cagayan de Oro, outplayed Manila top player Iggy Chavarillo, who replied the team's sputtering finish by getting only 43-points that evened last.

Canlubang manager Richie Green of Wednesday, where the team from Laguna is also trying to raise the event's record-title hopeless 15.

"The players have matured," added the Canlubang Golf Club manager, who will be joining hands with Canlubang manager Luigi Yabe in mapping out the strategy to handle the expected challenge from Manila South-wonder and Mimosa.

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Canlubang manager Richie Green of the Philippine Sports Commission hit the turn with a three-under par round score of 32, then threw it all away on the back nine when he bogeyed seven times to record up with 38 points.

Carlo Gambari's 45 completed Manila's output of 128 for 564.

"The team needs to rebuild but we will need the approval of Chairman Ramon Ang and Vice Pres. Jose Cojuangco Jr.," said Chavarillo. He acknowledged the fact that Canlubang not only has the better players, the Laguna team likewise packs more.

Manila owns the record for most wins in the division with 13, including a streak of six that ended in 2006, when Canlubang finally joined the Senior bracket with a team made up of its former stars in the Metro tournament.

Mimosa, who runs last but has collected titles while representing Mark Black, was the individual plum by a point over rookie teammate Dave Hernandez with a 101 total. He earlier made 46 points at the Bacolod GCC to finish 2nd. Marcelo, while Fernandez had totalled 50-to-both occasions.

Manila Golf assembled 126 points on a 46 by DV Espiritu, a 42 by Rhondelle Diaz and either one of the 42s by Earl McCarthy and Mike Prieto to edge defiant by third place, 526-522.

Edwin Bertha marked 46 points, Cuby Castellanos added 45 but skidmark's third score was a 56 from either Peter Cervantes or Francis Amateur.

Discharged, with 162 Mimosa scoring 49 and Gianni Filipaldino a 47, rallied from third to win the Founders division by one over Camp John Hay, 217-218. Cebu Country Club was third with 216.

Eagle Ridge took the Sportsmen's plum with Rogelio Ocampo's Old-timer the Friendship class.

The International Golf Federation, Golfing Federation of Asia and Golf Federation of the Philippines have banned Ian Poulter, Paul Casey and Justin Rose from the Olympic Games. Poulter, Casey and Rose are among the top 10 players in the world rankings. The ban is part of the IGF's anti-doping policy. The IGF said it was "disappointed" with the decision but would not comment further.

TAKE THREE Tournament glue individual champion Tommy Manotoc is ecstatic this for powering Canlubang's former squad to its third straight PAL Interclub championship at the Negros Occidental Golf and Country Club in Bacolod City. From left, team coordinator Dody Perales, Boss Adriano, Lino Magpayo Jr., Bing Borja, Tony Olivo, Manotoc, Bally Vivo, Dave Hernandez and Luigi Yabe.

Pacquiao going the way of Erik Morales?

BARE EYE

Alexis Trinidad

HERE'S HEARTWARMING INFO FOR countless until late who the to-hear great news about Manny Pacquiao.

Manny has been eating healthy every day, with no cheater-whatsoever.

That come straight from the well-stocked Pacquiao kitchen at his classy apartment in Gulfstream.

That also confirms how savvy and lady Pacquiao feels at the stage in training for his next big fight.

Now, to the main fare who would insist and clear at least about something saving with their idol, here's the latest bulletin-and-headlines-inside:

"Manny still overweight at 138 and a half. Sure you're sang him."

* * *

That advice registered via text message flying from Pacquiao's place at the Philippine residences, sent by one Jonnel, none Sonny Boy Pacquiao-Insider.

It's obvious our informant, who else sounded the info yesterday, did it with great reluctance.

But, at the same time, the fellow must've felt bringing the Pacquiao poundage problem in the open could help serve as timely warning for the national boxing idol to seriously attend to his weights.

"Pelicula also has Marquez (He'll be in great danger against Marquez.)" (Text enhancement added.) is the same text message.

Needless to say, WBC super featherweight champion Juan Manuel Marquez, who Pacquiao meets in a rematch on March 15, has had his poundage in check well ahead of schedule.

The Mexican model 130-pound ruler checked in at 133 last week, the same time Pacquiao registered 139 lb.

* * *

That's it. There's no news on how much Marquez weighed yesterday but it's safe to guess he must be wearing, careful not to let peak for a thread.

Of course, we all have to trust what trainer Freddie Roach has repeatedly claimed: that everything looks great is really good. The Senior brother with a team made up of his former stars in the Metro tournament.

Meantime, who-must-be-Ian has (un)solicited roles while representing Mark Black, was the individual plum by a point over rookie teammate Dave Hernandez with a 101 total. He earlier made 46 points at the Bacolod GCC to finish 2nd. Marcelo, while Fernandez had totalled 50-to-both occasions.

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DBP

Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines ("DBP"), through its Pre-qualification, Bids and Awards Committee ("PBAC"), hereby issues this Invitation to interested parties to apply for pre-qualification and to bid for the purchase and assumption of DBP's rights, title, interest and obligations on assets included in a Portfolio of Non-Performing Assets with total Gross Book Value ("GBV") of approximately Philippine Peso One Billion Eight Hundred Million (PhP1,800,000,000.00) only, plus "Sweetener Net Profit Auction of Non-Performing Assets", or the "Transaction".

The Portfolio of Non-Performing Assets will be sold through a sealed-bid public auction process. All interested parties may inspect, inquire, and obtain the detailed Bidding Guidelines, Book 1, Terms of Reference for Pre-qualification and the Pre-qualification Documents starting February 27, 2008 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. from and at the following address:

THE SECRETARIAT, PRE-QUALIFICATION, BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Sealed Bid Public Auction of DBP's Portfolio of Non-Performing Assets
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Makati City, Philippines 1200
Telephone no. +632 810 49 53 and +632 818 9511 local 2130/2296
Telecopier/e-mail: bidsaleb@devbankphil.com.ph

Interested parties are required to submit themselves to the pre-qualification process by submitting the required Pre-qualification Documents specified in the aforementioned Terms of Reference for Pre-qualification that take the pre-qualification criteria. The PBAC will notify each interested party of the result of the evaluation of the Pre-qualification Documents. Each interested Party that passed the evaluation shall pay the non-refundable Due Diligence Fee amounting to Philippine Pesos One Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand and 00/100 (PhP125,000.00) to complete its pre-qualification criteria. A Pre-qualified Bidder may subsequently be disqualified to participate in the Transaction should there be any material and/or intentional misstatement of information in the Pre-qualification Documents submitted to DBP.

The Bidder Registration Cut-Off Date is on March 14, 2008. DBP, in its sole and absolute discretion, reserves the right to accept or decline pre-qualification documents received from any interested party after said date. Kindly note that pre-qualification documents submitted after the last date of the Investor Due Diligence Period, March 3, 2008, or Bidder Registration Cut-Off Date, March 14, 2008 will delay the distribution of the Bidding Guidelines and Due Diligence Information to the particular interested party. The Bidder Due Diligence Period ends on April 1, 2008 and the Bid Submission Date is April 2, 2008.

DBP ASSUMES NO OBLIGATION WHATSOEVER TO COMPENSATE OR INDEMNIFY ANY INTERESTED PARTY, PRE-QUALIFIED BIDDER OR WINNING BIDDER, AS THE CASE MAY BE, FOR ANY EXCUSE OR LOSS THAT SUCH PARTY/BIDDER MAY INCUR IN ITS PARTICIPATION IN THE PRE-QUALIFICATION AND BIDDING PROCESS.

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(Sgd) ARMANDO O. SANIA
Executive Vice President and Chairman
Pre-qualification, Bids & Awards Committee

SPORTSWATCH

Miriam, De La Salle-Lipa spikers in title duel

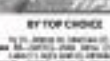
MIRIAM COLLEGE-IROFOC DE LA SALLE-ZOBEL, 25-23, 25-19, 19, MINOR: La Salle-Lipa rallied against Makati Templo Church, 13-25, 25-20, 25-13, yesterday to forge a championship showdown in the 2008 Cebu's Sports Junior Girls Volleyball League at the College de San Lorenzo Sports Complex on Congressional Avenue in Quezon City. The Miriam duel is set 11 a.m. on Saturday of the same venue. DLSZ and RISC collide in the third place of 10. In the boys' division, Mapúa Lobregat U's downed University of Perpetual Help-Molino, 25-8, 25-21, to league mentor Inal Ilan alongside Lourdes Stewart III, formidable coach and band School. **Marlon Bernardino, Contributor**

Makati 5-cock derby gets under way

IT'S CHAMPIONSHIP OR BUST FOR METRO MANILA'S BIG TIME COCKERS as the 1998 Dino 5-Cock Derby hosts all today at the one Makati Coliseum. The champions will be known immediately after the derby, according to promoters Lito Dofelas, Rudy Salud and Wilfredo Cruz of PETU Sports and Entertainment Corp. Hosts Ito Aquino and Edgar Sarmiento guarantee a total prize-loay group due to the inclusion of cash incentives. Meanwhile, a P200,000 special 5-cock event comes next at the venue on Wednesday with Mon Tecmo of Valenzuela and Roy Tuazon of Rizal as hosts. Entry fee is P5,000.

Nat'l 'Barebulan' kicks off at SJC today

BACKED BY LEADING GAMEFOWL BREEDERS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, the richest-cockpit P12 1/2-million National Barebulan (9-Cock) Derby unfolds at the San Juan Coliseum today with Sagupaan Complexo 3000 as sponsor. Today's 7-cock elimination round will be followed by another round on Wednesday with the qualifiers advancing to the semifinal event on Saturday. The nationwide event drew 96 bulanan to be launch last year. Yesterday, the Blue Mountain Sports Arena in Antipolo City became the latest venue of the event with elimination knockup on April 4 and 5. Qualifying rounds will also be staged in 15 other cockpits nationwide.



BY TOP CHOICE

Hapee pins hopes on ex-UST ace Cruz

Tourists Go, Rivero soak in Olympic atmosphere

By June Navarro

Klitschko collects another crown

WLADIMIR Klitschko, aiming to cohort of heavyweight kahs, rises has three-to-his-name effort striking Baban Bengtsson's WBO title via a decision. Klitschko's view growing after duo WBC and WBA titles.

AP

Don Enrico captures Chairman's Cup

By Manuel R. Carrillo

Gabica, C'lasang in world 8-ball tilt

Kia Motors extends major commitment to Australian Open on eve of tournament final

SPORTS

MATCH PLAY FINAL

Woods takes on Cink

MARANA, ARIZONA—TIGER WOODS edged defending champion Heath Slocum 2-up to reach the final of the Accenture Match Play Championship for the fourth time in nine tries on Saturday.

Woods will face Stewart Cink, a first-time finalist after topping Justin Leonard, 4-and-2, in the other semifinal.

Woods never rattled in his tight semifinal with Sweden's Straneo, who led him with a 15-foot birdie on the 11th. But the 17th hole has been somewhat of a charm for the world's No. 1 player, who might not be around if not for a 30-foot eagle putt he made on the first round, or Aaron Baddeley's rugby-out that just missed to the right on Friday.

After fating a tough birdie shot to 12 feet, Woods holed the birdie putt for a 1-up lead, and rounded up with a 2-up victory when Straneo took four shots to reach the final green.

Cink, who was 7 under on his first nine holes to downing Leonard, last played in the final group with Woods last month at the Dutch International. Cink started that round right then behind.

This time, they start all square over 36 holes on Dorac Monument.

WOODS

CINK

Woods will have an advantage in experience, among other things. Cink has never made it this far in the Match Play Championship, while Woods won in 2003 and 2004, and lost to be final to Darren Clarke in 2000.

Cink's last victory was the NEC Invitational in 2006. Since that time, he a winless in 85 tournaments on the US PGA Tour, while Woods has won 22 more in 56 starts.

It will be the sixth all-American final in 10 years of this Match Golf Championship.

Nobody played better on Saturday than Cink, who until this year advanced as far as the quarterfinals only one time.

He broke an early lead against 20 Open champion Angel Cabrera and pulled away with four birdies in a five-hole stretch on the back nine for a 3-and-1 victory to reach the semifinals.

Cink and Woods have met only one time in this tournament, with Woods beating him in the third round of 1999. AP

Ginobili helps Spurs gain tie for S'west lead

SAN ANTONIO—TIM SAN ANTONIO Spurs scored a 99-89 home win over New Orleans on Sunday to record their 10th win in a row and join the Mavericks at the top of the Southwest Division.

"It was a fine win for us against a really good basketball team," San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich told reporters. "Our can understand why New Orleans is at the top of the division doing as well and they've done."

Argentine Ginobili scored 29 points and added a career-high 12 assists and grabbed six rebounds. Tim Duncan had 23 points, 11 rebounds, six assists and four blocked shots in the victory.

"Obviously, Manu has been on fire for quite a while while playing 40-hour basketball and I think Tommy is back in the groove," Popovich said of Ginobili and Duncan.

The Hornets rallied from a 17-point deficit and tied the game with 7:05 remaining but the Spurs regained control to outrun a 102-78 home loss in January.

Chris Paul scored 27 points and David West 14 for the Hornets, who lost for the second night in a row.

"There is nothing to panic about," said New Orleans coach Byron Scott. "Now we know what teams are looking to do against us, being physical, so we'll just have to adjust."

In other games, the New Jersey Nets erased a 102-91 win over Indiana.

The Philadelphia 76ers erased the last 10 points in overtime to record a 101-96 road victory over the Miami Heat.

The Washington Wizards picked up only their second road win for the last 32 games, a 130-95 home victory over the Charlotte Bobcats.

The Utah Jazz scored a 100-94 home win over the Atlanta Hawks.

The Jazz are 14-2 in their last 16 games.

Pau Gasol scored 23 points and added six assists and five rebounds to help the Lakers earn a 113-95 victory over the Los Angeles Clippers. Andrew

Preparing to go to the prom?

Check out the TAILORS section of the

DPC YELLOW PAGES

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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IN THIS ISSUE
- GDP growth seen at 5.6% in '08 /B5
- More traders turn to gov't to protect forex gains /B8

BUSINESS
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Tell us your feedback: Inquire by name/gender/message to 291-1 (Globe) or 288 (Smart) E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph

Gov't raising tariff on oil imports to 2%

Move seen to raise diesel price by 50 centavos a liter

By Abigail L. Ho

WITH THE INTERNATIONAL price trigger points no longer enough to keep crude and finished product tariff at one percent, the Department of Energy will raise the rate to 3 percent by next month.

This, however, is still lower than the regular tariff of 5 percent.

DOE oil industry management bureau director Zenaida Monsada said Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes signed on Feb. 19 the certification for the 3-percent tariff, paving the way for its implementation in March.

The government cut early this month the tariff on crude and refined petroleum products by 2 percentage points, bringing the tariff level to just 1 percent.

The tariff cut was implemented when international price trigger points were breached in the first two weeks of January; the evaluation per-

story in

Pag-IBIG to sell P20B in bad assets

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE STATE-CONTROLLED HOME DEVELOPMENT Mutual Fund, popularly known as the Pag-IBIG Fund, plans to auction some P20 billion worth of bad assets this November to free up more funds for its low-cost shelter financing.

In an interview, Pag-IBIG Fund president Romeo Dalmilan said the housing provident fund has mandated Ernst & Young to financial advisor for the unloading of the bad assets. 60 percent of which are made up of foreclosed property while the rest are highly delinquent receivables.

The sound portfolio represents about 10 percent of Pag-IBIG Fund's P200-billion in assets.

"Many of these assets were acquired when the housing program only had P500,000 as maximum loanable amount a borrower," Dalmilan said.

To date, Pag-IBIG extends loans for housing units priced as low as P200,000 up to P3 million, although the average outstanding loan is about P475,000. It has earmarked at least P50 billion for new housing loans this year.

"Ernst & Young is now conducting the due diligence audit. They will provide the financial as we can come up with the correct acceptable value of these assets because pricing has to be meaning-ful as well as based on data and condition of collateral," Quimbo explained.

But Quimbo said Pag-IBIG would

FAO-BBG/B2

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STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

(See stock market report on Page B3)

Bears seen to dominate trading

THE LOCAL EQUITIES MARKET WILL continue to face bearish sentiment this week as investors weigh negative news about the US economy, supplanted by the growing political drama on the local front.

Barring any good news, market watchers expect the Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) to test the 2,000 support level, having already lost 102.01 points or 3.72 percent last week. At the end of trading last Friday, the PSEi stood at 2,660.24.

"The market is weak," Citisec Online president Conrado Bello said. "If you look at the profile of people in the market right now, there is no 'long-term attitude.'"

He explained that the recent selldown was prompted by investors who had positioned themselves in the market earlier this year, and were deciding to take profits due to uncertain market conditions.

"The selling is being led by the foreign traders who came in earlier," Bello said.

The broker added that the proximity of the anniversary of the People Power Revolution—and the uncertainty that surrounds the local political scene—would also weigh on the near-term prospects of the equities market.

"There is a lot of negative news right now, and I don't think that would change soon," the Citisec Online chief said.

Weakness in the US stock market is expected to impact locally, especially after oil prices rose above $100 a barrel last week, fueling fears of higher inflation and

MARE/B3

Bears seen to dominate trading

From page B1

higher interest rates—until a recession—is the world's biggest economy.

In a research note, online broker All Capital Securities said that the local market would continue to follow the leads of the major markets abroad.

"The main market that investors will be monitoring will be Wall Street," it said. "Locally, investors will be watching out for developments in the political arena."

"Investment in the market is basically a reaction of a US recession continue in long the headlines," All Capital added.

Despite this, the broker said it remained bullish on the country's economic and corporate fundamentals.

It advised its clients to look out for bargains, especially since prices of some blue chip counters have come off significantly in more recent levels.

"Our favored investment instruments remain, making and some long-term positioning on banks," All Capital said. Dwelle L. Jones

Can we defy gravity in 2008?

"DEFYING GRAVITY" WAS THE CATCHphrase used recently by the government economic managers to describe our economy's 2007 performance. One might indeed say that the surprising 7.3 percent growth of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2007 amounted to that as, to use the government's earlier slogan, beat the odds.

Extra boost

How did we pull it off? What made our economy grow beyond the 5-6 percent rate expected by everyone? Closer analysis of the data clearly reveals that it was almost entirely government spending that gave the extra boost to the economy's growth. In any economy, there are four major buyers of the goods and services produced in the economy (households), the government (in the form of both consumption and investment expenditures), firms themselves (as they buy products of other firms as inputs in their own production), and foreigners (via our exports). The 2007 full year data show that personal consumption spending grew by 6 percent (and, therefore, expectedly so), and exports by 3.1 percent. But government consumption grew by 10 percent, and investment spending by both growth more and private firms grew by 9.8 percent. The bulk of the latter came from a 32-percent growth in government construction. In fact, private investments in durable equipment and basic infrastructure grew by only 3.7 and 4.6 percent, respectively. Private construction did post a welcome 10.2-percent growth as well, but it was clearly the surge in government infrastructure spending that dominated the overall increase in investment spending.

What this all means is that our economy managed to defy gravity because government managed to provide a bail-boost to pull it up.

Headwinds

Can we do a repeat in 2008? In my recent economic briefings, I likin our economy to an airplane challenged by strong headwinds, low fuel, and excess baggage. The headwinds—or the factors beyond our control—are the feared US recession and the widely expected global economic slowdown. While I have recently written that the effects would likely be traced by our reduced direct linkages with the US economy, there are others who believe that we are in for a tougher ride than we might expect. And the reason for this is that our other major trade and investment partners, Japan and Europe, are also expected to slow down. Moreover, we have other headwinds, such as the continuing weakness of the US dollar against our currency and other currencies in the region, which could affect our competitiveness in the export markets.

Low fuel

The "low fuel" challenge refers to the tightening tax collection performance of the government, as evidenced by the reversed direction in the revenue growth rate in the past year. We were spared by one-shot privatization earnings in 2007, which is what made the government "bailout" possible. This year is quite different. Even Gov. Jose Salceda fears that the President may no longer be the lucky female casino that he has jokingly described her to be. While government expenditure appeared to be the central of its infrastructure spending this year, he projects that hardly anything will be left in subsequent quarters to sustain this.

What could save the day is if BPO and Casinos pull a small miracle and dramatically turn around tax collection performance. Otherwise, private investment will have to take over the pig bill by government for the remainder of the year. Announced investment transactions by large companies may yet do this, but how these companies will make good on these investment promises to be seen.

Excess baggage

The third drag on the economy is the persistent excess baggage of graft and corruption, bad governance, and the consequent polarized political unrest that this has been fueling, now reaching a renewed crescendo. I believe the people are considering and definitive referral on this nagging problem, regardless of the leadership, are economic prospects will continue to be weighed down by a persistent lack of confidence by private investors, both big and small.

So will the economy defy gravity and beat the odds again in 2008? My own personal view is that we can. The reconciled Business Cycle model, a mathematical model of the Philippine economy can by my colleague Dr. Luis Beades, shows that the economy could outside rate at 6.3 percent growth in 2008, barring all impediments. But the question is, will I believe that the chances, given the above, are quite low, as I'm leaning more on a 6-7 percent GDP growth. But I'd welcome being surprised again.

Comments are welcome at chakin@inquirer.info

Pag-IBIG to sell ...

From page B1

not accept a steep "haircut" or loss in book value (due to the discounts accepted by the seller) because on its own, the housing provident fund has been able to sell foreclosed housing units by offering a discount of only 20 percent.

He noted that in 2007 alone, Pag-IBIG was able to sell 92.8 billion worth of foreclosed housing units through the retail windows of its offices nationwide.

"Therefore, we're better able to earn 80-90 percent of book value. This provides the benchmark for the value. We've been selling at 80 percent as it shouldn't be far from that," Quintelo said.

Last November 2005, Pag-IBIG sold some of its bad assets along with those of Sentinel Home Mortgage Finance Corp. (SHMFC) through a joint venture with Deutsche Bank-called Bankman Housing Finance Inc. The joint venture company took over P1.3 billion worth of bad residential mortgage loans unloaded by the now-controlled housing agencies, one of which 35 percent belonged to Pag-IBIG.

At that time, he said the bad assets were sold for about 20 centavos for every P1 owned loan exposure, indicating a loss of 80 percent. The bad loans are now being managed by pharmacy mortgage servicer Asiabanco Bahay Financial Services Inc.

"We're open to any form of disbursement, whether it's a joint venture or an equity partner in the servicing company," Quintelo said.

Unlike the foreclosed assets of banks, Quintelo said the portfolio to be unloaded by Pag-IBIG consisted purely of small loans as the builders must have total servicing capability.

He said Pag-IBIG would like to get 60 of these sound assets as soon as possible because of the high cost of holding on to these assets, estimated at 2.5 percent of the book value of the sound portfolio each year.

"It's not moving and we even incur expenses on them. That's what you call a drag on the balance sheet. It's bringing your bottom line down," he said.

Meanwhile, Quintelo said, termed the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' new policy encouraging banks to offer low-cost housing loans, saying the latter was too big for Pag-IBIG alone to service.

The BSP recently approved a landmark rules-loosing loan framework that seeks to open up more shelter financing opportunities for the "economically active" poor without any government guarantees. This new housing microfinance framework, which targets the low-income segment of the population typically excluded by more financial institutions, will allow banks to offer micro-loans for home improvement and construction as well as (some) lot acquisitions for as long as they apply microfinance principles and low premium. On the other hand, the borrower must be "economically active" or has a source of loan repayment through a livelihood activity.

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NOTICE TO ALL STOCKHOLDERS

APPROVAL OF 30% STOCK DIVIDEND

PHELEX MINING CORPORATION hereby announces the approval, at the special stockholders' meeting held on February 21, 2008, of the 30% stock dividend declared by the Company's Board of Directors on October 23, 2007.

The Record Date of entitlement to the stock dividend is March 7, 2008.
Payment Date will be April 4, 2008.

PUBLIC SEALED BIDDING

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5. In the event that the highest accepting bidder failed to comply with the specified payment terms, the 10% deposit shall be forfeited as penalty.
6. PNB reserves the right to reject any and all bids at its sole discretion, waive any defects or informality in the bids received and accept the bid most advantageous to PNB but does not guarantee that any award shall be made.
7. Bidder shall be responsible to the payment of documentary stamp tax (DST), up to the selling price only and any excess shall be for the account of the winning bidder. All other expenses such as documentary stamp tax, transfer tax, registration fees and other fees related to the transfer of the title in the name of the winning bidder shall be for the account of the winning bidder.
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that VITRO truly is a world-class data center.

I congratulate ePLDT for VITRO Data Center's 3rd certification of its ISO9001:2000 Quality Management standard and its 2nd certification to ISO27001:2005 Information Security standard. These achievements attest to VITRO's unmatched capability to provide our country's data-based businesses with the backbone and foundation they need to capitalize on the growing global opportunities for them.

As well, I commend VITRO for securing its accreditation with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), which recognizes it as a world-class, environment friendly facility that is ready to accommodate the needs of foreign investors.

On its 8th year, I have great faith that the people of VITRO will continue to be driven towards higher levels of excellence, in the process garnering more accolades, patents of quality, and satisfied customers.

Sincerely,

MANUEL V. PANGILINAN
Chairman
Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company

We are glad to be informed that ePLDT VITRO Data Center has received certifications on ISO27001:2005 Information Security Standard and ISO9001:2000 Quality Management Standard and an accreditation with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA).

We hope that you will continue to uphold the image of the Philippines as a source of leading IT-enabled service providers. We urge you to intensify your capacity building efforts and showcase your company as a model for best practices, which other companies in the Philippines as well as in other countries should try to emulate.

Thank you and best regards.

SECRETARY RAY ANTHONY ROMAS CHUA III
Chairman
Commission on Information and Communications Technology

Congratulations seem to VITRO Data Center for another remarkable achievement!

The recertification of both your ISO27001:2005 Information Security Standard and ISO9001:2000 Quality Management Standard speaks volumes of your premiere standing as the preferred destination for global and regional IT operations consolidation and as a major provider of superior Business Process Outsourcing and Call Center Services. Add to this your accreditation with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority last year and VITRO has truly become the country's foremost Internet Data Center.

We thank you for all your efforts and look forward to even more stellar contributions in the years to come.

NAPOLEON L. NAZARENO
President & CEO
Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company

We are very pleased that our VITRO Data Center has successfully achieved its recertification for ISO27001:2005 for Information Security standard (formerly BS7799) as well as ISO9001:2000 for Quality Management (Online). These international standards assure that the VITRO Data Center complies with globally accepted specifications for data center operations.

These achievements come just less than a year after VITRO received its accreditation with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA). With this accreditation, the VITRO Data Center is now recognized by PEZA as a world-class, environment-friendly economic zone which can satisfy the demand of foreign companies for world-class, ready-to-occupy data center space.

With these certifications and accreditation, VITRO is poised to further strengthen the Philippines' value proposition as a preferred destination or hub for regional and global IT operations, and as a major location for the outsourcing of world-class knowledge processing and contact center operations.

We are proud of these great achievements of the VITRO Data Center as well as its valuable contributions to the ePLDT group. Congratulations!

RAY C. ESPINOSA
President & CEO
ePLDT

Philippine Economic Zone Authority

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Tax perks proposed for OFW stock investors

By Dimitri G. Lukas

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXchange (PSE) has asked Congress to pass an improved tax incentive package that would encourage expatriate Filipinos to invest in the country.

In a statement, the PSE said that the package was part of a program to develop the local capital market while helping Filipinos working overseas to overcome the adverse impact of the peso's appreciation.

"We consider the proposal a win-win solution because it will address the concerns not only of overseas Filipinos, but also of other key sectors in the economy," PSE president and CEO Francis Lim said.

Lim has submitted a position paper on the matter to House committee on economic affairs chair Rep. Ramon Durano VI in the hope that the contents of the PSE position paper would be included as an amendment to the proposed Personal Equity Retirement Account (Pera) Act.

He explained that the scheme would help entice expatriate Filipinos to send more foreign exchange to the country, despite the peso's appreciation. This is because the earnings that they would make from capital market investments could potentially offset the effects of the peso's appreciation.

"In turn, the increased foreign exchange inflows will help develop the local capital market and at the same time keep the peso stable," he added.

The peso has so far appreciated by 18 percent against the dollar since last year. This hurts overseas Filipinos, many of whom earn dollars or dollar-linked currencies.

On the other hand, the PSE index—the main barometer of local stock price movements—rose 21.4 percent in 2007. This was on top of the 42 percent increase in 2006 and the 20-percent growth in 2005.

The long-delayed Pera bills, which aim to establish a voluntary and supplementary retirement scheme, are now pending in both chambers of Congress.

ICTSI, ATI seen raising cargo-handling rates

By Riza T. Olchondra

CARGO HANDLING RATES IN THE country's two main ports may be increased soon. International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI) and Asian Terminals Inc. (ATI) may increase in the near couple of weeks as cargo handling operators brace for increased fuel, labor and other costs.

In an interview at the sidelines of the inauguration of the new Kline Maritime Training Academy on Friday, Association of International Shipping Lines (AISL) president Dennis Ranghab said they have agreed in the plan of the two port operators to increase the latest fuel surcharge rates.

He said a proposal to that effect was recently submitted to the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) for public consultation and implementation.

"The (increase) is between 12 and 14 percent and would be spread over the next two years just like what was approved and implemented in 2005 and 2006 wherein the increase was implemented in two tranches," Ranghab said.

"It's now up to the PPA to strike a win-win solution with the port users with regards to the petition," he said.

Both operators became qualified to increase their cargo-handling rates after the completion of the two-tranche rate adjustment in 2006.

The PPA, meanwhile, said early this year that it was anticipating a petition for increases from cargo-handling operators nationwide.

PPA general manager Oscar Inviña said the agency was inclined to allow tariff increases as long as port operators meet new requirements regarding increases.

RP exports to Japan up by 9% to $8.7B

By Conrad W. Domingo

MERCHANDISE EXPORTS to Japan went up 9 percent to $8.66 billion in 2007 even as Malacañang's plea for the Senate to ratify the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement remained imbroglio.

The Japan External Trade Organization, citing provisional data from the Ministry of Finance, said Philippine imports from Japan also grew by 9.8 percent to $8.46 billion.

Jetro added that Japan's surplus on trade with the Philippines last year went down by $179 million to $761 million from one year ago level.

Last year, the Philippines accounted for 1.3 percent of Japan's total exports of $730.61 billion.

On a monthly average, exports to Japan improved by 9.9 percent to $721.61 million, last seven traffic increased 16.2 percent to $862.92 million.

Last Feb. 13, Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila said the ratification of the Jepza would lure more Japanese investments into the country and transform the Philippines into a base of Japanese offshore manufacturing centers.

"The Jepza will provide the framework under which trade between the two countries will flourish," Favila said. "Jetro will be mobilizing which will push foreign investors other than Japan to also increase their existing investments."

He said tariff and nontariff trade barriers would be lifted under the Jepza, with most of these happening in the first day of the agreement's implementation, and the rest within 10 years from date of effectivity.

Favila said the agreement would bring in a P52 billion addition to the gross domestic product, aside from an increase by at least P500 billion in foreign direct investments within the first four years of the Jepza implementation.

Going data from Tanning group, " he said 98 percent of all agricultural exports to Japan which amounted to some $4 billion worth of revenue yearly—would enjoy zero tariffs as soon as Jepza took effect.

However, the Fair Trade alliance has renewed calls for the renegotiation of the trade deal, saying this was the only recourse left for the trump so persistent negotiations failed to justify its merits during Senate hearings.

'08 GDP growth seen at 5.6%

OFW remittances to continue supporting the economy

By Michaela V. Ramos

PACIFIC: A POSSIBLE SLOW down in the global economy, the Philippines is likely to post a gross domestic product growth of 5.6 percent this year, decelerating from the three-decade high of 7.3 percent last year.

This was according to investment bank Credit Suisse, which said the Philippines would not be immune from a volatile external environment considering that it had the United States and Japan as its biggest export markets.

Credit Suisse, however, does not consider the anticipated slowdown in GDP growth worrisome. It said the expected 5.6-percent GDP growth is "adequate" considering the external problems.

The projected growth, it said, would be supported by a continually growing remittances from overseas Filipino workers.

OFWs' remittances helped boost last year's domestic consumption, which posted a 6-percent growth, and served as one of the main growth drivers of the economy.

"We expect remittances to continue growing in 2008, albeit at a slower rate than that in 2007, owing to the boom in the Middle East, which hosts the largest number of overseas Filipino workers," Credit Suisse said in a report on its assessment of selected Asian countries.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas earlier reported that OFW remittances sent through banks and other formal channels amounted to $14.4 billion last year, up 13.2 percent from the 2006 level.

Credit Suisse said that strong remittances would just be one of the factors boosting domestic demand this year.

"The momentum in domestic demand is quite strong, thanks to ever-increasing consumption and investment, and historically low credit risk premiums and local interest rates," the investment bank said.

The low interest rate environment was credited for helping attract more private and offering government to spend less in servicing its client's debts.

The Department of Finance earlier reported that the government saved about P80 billion last year for spending less than the allocated program for paying interest on maturing obligations. Finance officials said the amount could be used to prepay some of the government's debt, interest and pull down the country's debt-to-GDP ratio to levels considered manageable.

The Philippine government said it was preparing measures to boost the economy and counter the effects of a possible US recession.

Economic managers said the government would spread the bulk of the national budget for infrastructure in the first half of the year to build a buffer against the expected drag.

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RP in talks with Vietnam for rice supply

By Amy R. Borja

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULture is holding talks with the government of Vietnam for a guaranteed supply of rare this year.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap said Vietnam officials had expressed willingness to set aside a specific volume of rice for the Philippines.

"We have informed them of the volume needed and we are fairly confident that we can get positive response from Vietnam," he said.

Yap said the proposed volume was within the 1.6 million metric tons that Food Inc. programmed for importation this year.

"We do not see it going beyond this for now," Yap said.

He explained that the DA had been studying the rice supply situation in the country and that it would decide whether or not the government's volume would be increased.

"As much as possible, this volume [from Vietnam] should be delivered within the first half of the year to hit the National Food Authority's target of having a 30-day buffer supply," Yap added.

Yap assured the public that the DA could secure supply for the buffer stock, which remained at a safe level as the NFA was able to preserve more than half a million metric tons in the last quarter of 2007.

The NFA conducted two tenders in December and January for a total volume of 876,700 MT, the bulk of which came from Vietnam. It plans to conduct another tender to finish for the supply and delivery of 450,000 MT of rice.

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Meco corn project expanding

OFFICIALS OF THE MANILA ECONOMIC and Cultural Office announced the expansion of its ongoing modern corn cultivation technology transfer project in the Caraga Region.

The project is being jointly undertaken by the Taiwan's Food and Fertilizer Technology Center, Department of Agriculture and the Northeast Mindanao State Institute of Science and Technology.

The project's expansion is aimed at assisting 500 Caraga farmers beneficiaries and doubling the region's corn's productivity.

The corn farming project was made possible through a three-year (2006-2008) agricultural technical assistance program launched by Meco, PFTC, the DA and Nemsiatet two years ago to improve quality corn productivity in the Caraga region via modern cultivation techniques and new hybrid corn's varieties.

In the pilot areas, corn production increased by up to 200 percent, enacting better income for farmers in the region.

Meco Taiwan managing director and resident representative Antonio Basilio said that initial results showed an average yield of more than 5 metric tons per hectare. Some even achieved yields of as high as 8 MT per hectare.

"These encouraging results surpassed the project's principal aim to improve corn yields in Caraga to 3 MT per hectare from a very low regional average of 1.77 MT per hectare."

Basilio said the project highlighted the importance of the farmers' ability to generate the markets to use Taiwanese agri-technology, including propagation of parent plants and the production of hybrid seeds. This would ensure their local availability and distribution at very competitive prices.

Basilio said he was hoping the project's success would help boost farmers' productivity in Caraga and other areas in Mindanao and ensure the country's food security program under the Arroyo administration.

"We hope more farmers in Mindanao, where 60 percent of the country's annual corn production come from, will benefit from the project and learn how it can help them to master fertilized opportunities as well."

Citing a report of Meco programs officer Ferper Moreno Jr., Basilio said that only about a dozen of so farmers directly benefited from the project last year although many others, through technology diffusion and word of mouth, actually witnessed it and were willing to try more modern corn farming through the Taiwanese technology.

Pre-need sector woes remain

By Dinah L. Lucir

THE PRE-NEED INDUSTRY'S EXPECTED recovery in 2007 failed to materialize as potential clients continued to shy away from buying new policies in the wake of the crisis that affected the sector a few years ago.

More importantly, data from the Insurance and Exchange Commission (SEC) revealed that for plans that were sold last year, pre-need firms saw "initial collections" that were almost 20 percent lower than previous year's level.

This means that more and more firms are collecting either full contract price or lower initial payments requirements on their policies—a trend that is expected to squeeze margins further in an already competitive industry.

According to the SEC, initial collections of pre-need firms in 2007 amounted to P2.564 billion, trailing by 19.19 percent decline from the previous year's level of P3.493 billion.

The continued downward becomes more alarming when superimposed against the backdrop of the country's rapid economic growth last year, which saw almost all other segments of the financial industry given at a faster clip.

The decline was felt most acutely in the pension plan segment of the market where initial collections dropped by 26.18 percent, from P1.049 billion in 2006 to only P1.260 billion last year.

Initial payments for education plans—the hardest hit of the business segments by the set-up—declined by 15.44 percent year-on-year in 2007, but initial payments for life plans went by 26.83 percent during the same period.

In terms of sales, the industry continued to suffer throughout 2007, as only P18.939 billion worth of pre-need plans during the year, or 4.24 percent lower than the P19.598 billion in 2006.

Education plans continued to suffer from the industry downturn, with total sales falling by 4 percent, from P4.005 billion in 2006 to only P3.849 billion last year.

The sharpest decline was posted by the pension plan sector, whose sales dropped by 12.04 percent to P13 billion from P14.6 billion in 2006.

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Budget fares perk up local tourism, says PTAA

Producers Bank gets ₱1.4-billion credit line

By Doris C. Dumlao

PRODUCERS RURAL BANKING CORP., the biggest rural bank in Luzon in terms of branch network, has obtained a ₱1.4 billion credit line from various government financial institutions and private lenders for relending to its countryside.

Producers Bank, which is based in Quezon Center, serves small and medium enterprises and is considered one of the pioneering banks in microfinance or lending to the entrepreneurial poor.

In a recent statement, the bank said the biggest credit line among GFIs came from the Land Bank of the Philippines, which granted a ₱500-million credit facility on top of investments in its preferred stocks.

The rural bank also got the approval from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas late last year for a ₱453.56 million rediscounting line, representing 110 percent of its net worth.

Rediscounting is a credit facility of the BSP to help banks shore up their cash by refinancing the loans they extend to their clients.

Under this facility, banks can refinance their peso, dollar and yen loans granted to finance export, import, tourism, food production, transport, warehousing, agricultural and low-cost housing, microfinance, services and agricultural loans with long guarantee period.

Other institutions that granted credit lines were: People's Credit and Finance Corp. (₱300 million), Development Bank of the Philippines (₱50 million), Philippine Business for Social Progress (₱35 million), Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. (₱100 million), National Livelihood Support Fund (₱50 million) and Small Business Corp. (₱20 million).

Over the last 12 years, Producers Bank has expanded its branch network to 44 covering Bongsar, Pampanga, La Union, Cagayan, Nueva Ecija, Aurora, Nueva Vizcaya, Bulacan, Pampanga, Zambales, Camarines Sur, Albay.

More travel groups choose to explore provinces

By Rommel P. Dominguez

DOMESTIC TOURISM HAS GROWN "significantly" over the past two years due to the increased availability of budget airlines as well as development efforts in the sector, according to an official of the Philippine Travel Agencies Association.

John Paul M. Caballes, PTAA vice president in charge of inbound business, said in an interview that the growth was observed not only in the increase in big conventions held in the country but also in the surge in local travel by families, friends and individuals.

"Domestic travel is definitely increasing in terms of the business that PTAA members are getting, particularly in the past two years," said Caballes, who is also managing director of Century Travel & Tours.

He attributed the growth mainly to increasing options for domestic travel, particularly budget air fares and declining transportation expenses.

"A major driver of what we are seeing as a trend is that for groups of professionals who are holding conventions or high-profile gatherings, the tendency is to go to the provinces rather than overseas," Caballes said.

"This is true especially among doctors, who want to be able to get back to their base in case of emergencies," he added.

Further, Caballes said domestic destinations that were not part of the traditional tourists' itineraries were also getting more attention.

"It helps that local governments and investors are undertaking efforts to further develop these areas as well as raise awareness about them," he said.

"One example is Subic in Zambales, which used to be known only among hard-core surfers," Caballes said. "Stakeholders there have really good projects in the pipeline aimed at drawing in more tourists, domestic and foreign alike."

Available data from the Department of Tourism show that in the first half of 2007, the most visited destinations were Laguna with 715,981 domestic tourists; Quezon, 529,760; Cebu, 443,056; and Baguio City, 417,933.

Industry watchers say statistics on domestic tourists were slow to gather and were usually dependent on the efficiency of data-gathering systems in the provinces.

Earlier this month, the PTAA held the 13th Travel Tour Expo at the SMX Convention Center.

Themed "Beyond Borders", the expo was aimed at promoting activities and destinations outside the usual lists.

For its participation in Travel Tour Expo, the DOT partnered with domestic airlines and hotel operators in the provinces of Batanes, Cagayan de Oro, General Santos, Zamboanga, and Davao as well as in the provinces of Misamis Oriental and Sarangani.

Increase investments in rice research, IRRI urges gov't

By Aziz R. Reina

THE INTERNATIONAL RICE RESEARCH Institute has urged the government to increase investments in agricultural research to sustain the growth of rice production.

In a presentation last week, Randy Barker of the IRRI social sciences division said research was needed to increase yield by as much as 10 percent for irrigated rice and 20 percent for hybrid rice, as well as reduce post-harvest losses and production costs.

Barker explained that these moves were needed to help address the challenges in the global rice sector, which include the decline in production growth and global rice stocks and rising prices of rice.

"Worldwide, average annual growth in rice yield has slackened to 0.8 percent during the period 1995-2007, from 2.1 percent in 1970-1990," Barker said.

The Philippines, he noted, fared relatively better with an average annual growth rate of 1.1 percent from 1981 to 2007, down from 2.8 percent in 1970-1990.

Worldwide, rice prices have risen by 56 percent from 2005-2008 while locally, rice prices have risen by 11 percent.

Currently, rice is traded at $480 a metric ton.

According to Barker, a number of factors have grounded consumers to the sharp increase in rice prices.

These include volatile weather, rising fertilizer and diesel prices, water scarcity, diversification to non-rice of agricultural lands, temporary restrictions on exports by India, China and Vietnam, and perceptions and speculations of traders and policy makers, he said.

Globally, there are six major rice producing countries, accounting for more than three-fourths of the world's production. These are China (30 percent), India (22 percent), Indonesia (8 percent), Bangladesh (7 percent), Vietnam (6 percent) and Thailand (5 percent).

While rice exports are concentrated in a handful of countries, rice imports are more widely dispersed with the Philippines accounting for 7 percent of those imports—one of the biggest in the world.

Drop in mango output feared

By Delmar Carlos
Inquirer Northern Luzon

CLARK FIELD, PAMPANGA—THE COUNTRY's mango exporters have expressed fears that production this year could decrease significantly due to climate change and increasing production cost.

Roberto Amores, president of Philippine Food Processors and Exporters Organization Inc., said the average annual mango production of 900,000 to one million metric tons could go down to 750,000 to 800,000 metric tons this year.

Amores, who limited reporters during the consultative workshop for food security organized by the Department of Agriculture here last week, said rains caused by global warming could affect the industry's production the past few years.

"We expect to have a wet summer and an typhoons during the next few quarters," he said, citing projections by the weather bureau.

The tropical cyclones will definitely take their toll on fruit and mango production, he added.

"Raw materials for mango production are now 20 to 30 percent higher than last year," said Amores, who is also a trustee of the Export Development Council of the Department of Trade and Industry.

The development, he said, has threatened to ruin the global market for local mangoes, particularly the United States where the country exports around $80 million worth of processed mango products.

To cushion the impact of high cost of production, the Department of Agriculture must endorse the proposal of stakeholders in the agriculture sector to suspend the levy on all agricultural imports.

The farmers, he said, would allow him to spend more producers and exporters to recoup their losses and cut down on production costs.

Gov't raising ...

Front page B1

oil for the February tariff.

This resulted in a reduction of P1 a liter in diesel prices.

For the March tariff, the DOE budget at Dubai crude and Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) diesel prices in the first two weeks of February (time frame breached only the trigger points for the 3 percent tariff level, the 2 percent tariff would be implemented in March.

Mercado said the impact of the tariff adjustment would likely not be reflected on diesel, the same as with February's tariff movement.

This should result in an increase of 50 centavos a liter at the pump, she said.

"But other factors still have to be considered. We'll still be talking with the oil companies on whether or not there are other things, like lower prices of other fuel products, which can offset the 11-percentage point tariff increase for March," she explained.

Under the implementing guidelines of a Malacañang order on excise tariff and oil, the tariff on crude and diesel would go down by 1 percentage point to recover when certain Dubai crude and MOPS diesel price trigger points are met.

For the tariff to go down to 2 percent from the regular 3 percent, Dubai crude should hit $83 a barrel and MOPS-based diesel at $105 a barrel.

The tariff would be further reduced to 1 percent at $92 a barrel for Dubai crude and $114 a barrel for MOPS-based diesel, and then would be scrapped altogether at $101 a barrel for Dubai crude and $115 a barrel for MOPS-based diesel.

With the average Dubai and MOPS diesel prices in the first two weeks of February going just a little beyond the 2 percent tariff trigger points, then that would be the tariff to be implemented in March.

BUSINESS

More traders turn to gov't to protect forex gains

BSP reports sizeable rise in demand for hedging products

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILI- nas has reported a rise in demand for hedging instruments among exporters since June last year when the government rolled out a major campaign to promote hedging products for sectors adversely affected by the peso's appreciation.

In a recent report to Congress, BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said total settlements under the government's hedging program for exporters had increased from only $113,000 as of September last year to $9.9 million as of Feb. 15.

"The hedging program aims to shield exporters from further exchange rate losses through foreign exchange insurance and forward foreign exchange protection products," Tetangco said.

The peso has year gained by nearly 3% percent against the US dollar, becoming Asia's best performing currency. As a result, the earnings of exporters and overseas Filipino workers were severely eroded.

The Development Bank of the Philippines, along with the Departments of Trade and Industry and the Department of Finance, then came out with the program for the benefit of exporters and overseas workers.

The BSP has since conducted conferences on hedging facilities for exporters in different regions, Tetangco said.

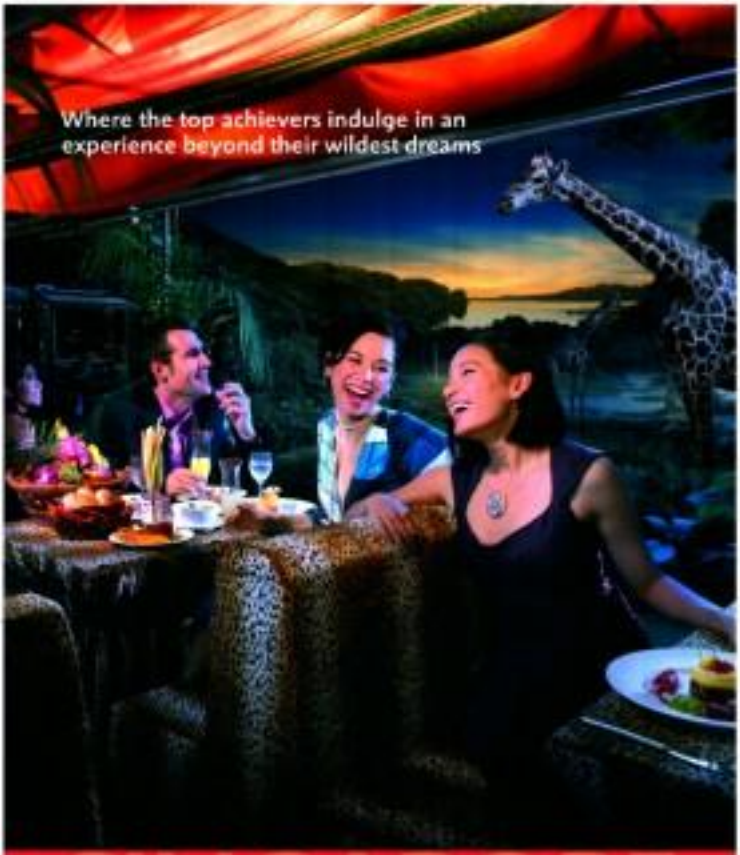
Among the hedging products the DBP is offering to DPWs is a forex insurance product where the fee won't be collected until the end of the contract. The minimum amount is $1,000, which can be insured for one month, three months or six months at the client's desired exchange rate.

If, for instance, a client wants to fix his remittance at an exchange rate of 40.81 in six months, he enters into an insurance protection contract with DBP. If after six months, the peso appreciates to 38, the client will still get the equivalent 40.81 rate when he remits his earnings. But if after six months, the rate is 43, the client doesn't need to sell to DBP and may instead sell in the market to get a better rate.

In a nutshell, the insurance gives OFWs the right but not the obligation to sell dollars to DBP for a fee.

Another hedging option is a forward contract, or an agreement to buy or sell a specific amount of currency at a future date.

Last week, the Philippine Dealing System Holdings Corp. and the Philippine Stock Exchange signed a deal to develop a local derivatives exchange to give investors an organized channel to hedge their currency stocks, credit and interest rate exposure.



In seeking US aid, execs touch up RP image

By Michelle V. Rorra

THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN HAS played up the "achievements" of the Arroyo administration in telling the level of integrity in public service—a move the government hopes will be enough to clinch higher financial aid from the US government's Millennium Challenge Corp. (MCC).

An official from the Office of the Ombudsman last week treated MCC representatives to a presentation that detailed the government's effort to minimize corruption.

The MCC requires a country to carry out anticorruption measures before it grants it financial aid. The money is intended to fund programs that will further improve a government's anticorruption efforts, such as beefing up transparency and technical capacity of concerned agencies in detecting questionable transactions.

The presentation to the MCC was made just as the Arroyo administration buried its secret video pin-ups allegations of high-level corruption in the scandal ZTE deal.

Evelyn Ballicu, assistant to the Ombudsman, said in the presentation, a copy of which was obtained by the media, that her office produced almost 1,200 public officials for administrative cases of corruption from 2004 to 2006.

She added that the Civil Service Commission also filed 264 cases of corruption against public officials from 2004 to 2007.

The Philippines was granted $21 million worth of financial assistance by the MCC in 2006. The amount was used to fund programs to improve the conduct of service of the Bureau of Internal Revenue, Bureau of Customs, Office of the Ombudsman and Department of Finance.

'08 mine deals seen to rack up ₱11.6B in sales

By Amy R. Borres

THE PHILIPPINES MAY TAKE STOCK OF the coming mop once key mineral projects become operational early next year.

Production from seven priority projects alone are projected to have a total sales value of $291 million or P11.6 billion in 2008, and $675 million or P26.8 billion in 2009.

"We are setting up mechanisms for more efficient processing to happen... these coming investments," said Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Lito Atienza.

According to Atienza, 2008 is a critical year for the industry as several major mining firms are expected to move on from the construction and development stage, and start actual production.

Projects now in the development stage are Carmen Copper Corp.'s Toledo copper project in Cebu, production of which is projected to have a combined sales value of $197.52 million in 2008; OceanaGold's Didipio copper-gold project, $13.94 million; Palawan HPAL Nickel Project Line 1, $48.56 million; Filminera Resources' gold project, $43.27 million; Ilgan Far Southeast Limited Plant, $140.32 million; Manicaa Forwarded smelter plant, $40.66 million; and the Philsaga gold project, $12.24 million.

Currently, there are 10 projects that are in the operating and expansion stage.

According to the World Bank, a country can be considered a mining country if its mineral and mineral product shipments constitute at least 6 percent to total exports.

The DENR hopes to raise to 6 percent the contribution of the mining industry in the country's total exports once the projects are in place by 2009.

Last year, exports of minerals and mineral products had reached $2.37 billion, constituting 4.8 percent to total exports.

The smell of success is in the air.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2008 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER B7/1

BUSINESS Monday

Business features Editor Margie Quiroga-Fajimo

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CrossWinds Tagaytay

There's time to waste here

Aetas join 'biotech revolution'

RP to go for share in $1B natural ingredients industry via 'malunggay' farming

By Amy R. Remo

THANKS TO SOME 2,000 AETA FAMILIES, THE once sleepy town of Bamban, Tarlac may soon grab a lucrative share of the booming $1-billion global natural ingredients industry.

According to the Department of Agriculture, these families have joined the 21st century "biotech revolution" through malunggay farming, allowing Bamban to possibly become a major supplier of raw materials to fuzzy international markets.

Through "Bukid Aetahops Farm sa Barangkong Ibo," these families from 12 Aeta communities will be given a seminar on malunggay farming, enabling them to cultivate the malunggay seeds in their farms.

"The program aims to empower the indigenous peoples of the town who can tap their vast ancestral lands, to make them more productive," Alicia Bags, director of the Department of Agriculture Biotechnology Program Office, said in a statement.

Launched last week, the government program intends to promote the massive cultivation of the lowly malunggay to help fight poverty, hunger and malnutrition in rural areas.

Dubbed as the "miracle vegetable," malunggay has been found by biochemists and molecular anthropologists as rich in vitamin C, vitamin A, iron and high density lipoprotein (HDL) otherwise known as good cholesterol.

A combination of antibacterial and flavonoid properties can be reportedly found in the plant's root bark extracts.

As a green leafy vegetable, malunggay is also found to contain glycosinolate that can prevent the development of cancer cells.

Aside from cancer, the onset of other chronic diseases like arthritis heart complications and kidney diseases can be prevented because of the potent antioxidants from malunggay.

It also helps maintain good eyesight, facilitates digestion and bowel movement, and can be used to clean wounds, cure stomach aches, anxiety, asthma, earache and headaches.

According to Tarlac 3rd District Rep. Jose Lapus, the "project will indeed be a big help to the Aetas, who suffer from extreme poverty despite having a vast ancestral land, which they can (now) turn into an agro-forestry plantation for the supply of malunggay seeds."

Currently, Aetas in this town earn a meager P140 a day, said Barangay Sun Valley Chairman Danilo Adriar, an Aeta leader.

"Farming for their everyday food or sustenance is a way of life among Aetas. Usually, Aetas plant root crops like camoteng kahoy or sweet potato, kamoteng kahoy or cassava, papaya and banana, which they sell in the market or the town proper," he explained.

The DA program, however, goes beyond teaching Aetas the basics of malunggay farming.

Aetas who cultivate malunggay seeds are now assisted of a buyer, as Amera International Corp. signed a purchase agreement with the Mamanpi sa Maghahukid ng Malunggay.

Amera is a food biotechnology firm which offers contracts to grow the backyard vegetable tree. It has also pioneered the extraction of oil from the seeds of malunggay, scientifically known as Moringa oleifera.

Amera is currently contracting farmers for the supply of malunggay seeds and leaves. It exports moringa oil to various companies that manufacture personal healthcare products and supplies powdered malunggay leaves to local food processors.

Under the purchasing agreement, Amera will buy malunggay seeds from the Aetas at P18 a kilo.

Sources that earns from seeds into pure oil, producing as much as one liter oil from less than 3 kilos of the seeds.

For its part, the Mamanpi sa Maghahukid ng Malunggay will plant malunggay in their vast ancestral land, turning it into a malunggay plantation for the purpose of supplying the seeds to Amera alone.

Danilo Manzanga, president and chief executive officer of Socota said that already, a US biotechnology firm is willing to buy a particular volume of malunggay seed oil, which will require some 500,000 hectares of land planted to the vegetable tree.

During the launch, the DA, through the Bureau of Plant Industry, distributed malunggay seedlings to encourage farmers to join the program.

Other highlights of the program launch included the establishment of a Tarlac Biotechnomentor Information Resource Center and provision of free dental and medical services.

Meanwhile, the Provincial Government of Tarlac led by Gov. Victor Yap had expressed support for the program and had vowed to help in the marketing aspect of malunggay products and byproducts.

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MACBOOK AIR VS EEEPC

A tale of two notebooks

By Chris M. Borromeo, MD
Contributor

A LOT OF PEOPLE are drawn to the sexiness and charm of a small ultra-portable computer which they can tote anywhere and show off at the nearest (and preferably the most populated) Starbucks they can find.

Currently, these ultramobile PCs, or UMPCs, are becoming more prevalent because of the demand for full-fledged computers in even smaller form factors.

Although UMPCs have been around for more than a year, it was only the entry of one product line that really put it on the map — the Asus Eee PC.

It is not the first UMPC to be marketed, but it certainly is the cheapest. Its small factor and low price captured the hearts of many consumers and has gone on to become Asus' biggest selling product ever. That Asus is the biggest motherboard manufacturer in the world is saying a lot. But around P18,000, you can have a fully functional computer with WiFi in roughly the size of a book organizer.

On the other hand, Apple just announced their own ultra-portable device in the MacBook Air (MBA), an incredibly thin version of their MacBook laptop. Although not as small as the EeePC, the MBA comes with the features of a full laptop in a very nice package.

It is what Apple calls the "World's Thinnest Laptop." But is true Apple fashion, all this prodigiousness comes at a very hefty price. $1,799 (or P80,000, based on an exchange rate of 44.64:$1)—and that's just for the "low end" version. The more expensive variant will set you back $3,100 (P138,384).

Although comparing the two would be like comparing apples (pardon the pun) and oranges, it still is important to understand the differences between the latest and greatest ultra-portable machines available today.

Operating system. The EeePC runs on a modified version of Linux called Xandros and has a simplified graphical user interface. It is perfect for people who are not too tech savvy, but a hassle for more advanced users. The MBA runs on a full version of OS X Leopard, which is the same one used on other laptop and desktop systems.

Processor. The EeePC runs on an Intel Celeron, running at 900 MHz. Although not a processing powerhouse, it does reasonably well for basic functions like word processing, Internet browsing and media playback. The MacBook Air (MBA) has more power under its hood, with a Core 2 Duo processor running at 1.6 or 1.8 GHz. It is also able to do more, such as simple photo and video editing, and is quite adept at multitasking.

Memory. The EeePC 4G comes with a standard 512 MB of RAM, which is enough room for the built-in Linux operating system, but it soon eggs schildo to 1 or even 2 GB. The MBA has 2 GB of RAM that is soldered to the motherboard and is not upgradable. Although it may be adequate for performing most tasks that it was made for, the lack of user upgradability means it may be a dead-breaker for some.

Storage. The EeePC has a solid state disk built into the motherboard with capacities of 4 or 8 GB. The low-end MBA comes with 80 GB in a more traditional hard disk drive that runs a little slower than conventional laptop drives, but Apple offers an option for a 64 GB solid state disk in its higher-end model.

Wireless connectivity. The MBA comes with the latest WiFi standard, 802.11n, which has a higher data rate (248 Mbits/s) and a better range than its previous-gen. 802.11g, which is what the EeePC uses. The MBA also comes with Bluetooth.

Wired connectivity. The MBA comes with a micro-DVI port, a lone USB port, and an audio port on the right through a proprietary MagSafe connector. The EeePC comes with a bevy of ports such as a LAN port, three USBs, both audio and mic jacks, and a VGA out port.

Expansion. The MBA has done away with any built-in expansion to conform to SSD. But the EeePC has an SDHC slot and an extra mini PCIe slot on earlier models.

Display. The MBA has a 13.3-inch display similar to the MacBook with a resolution of 1280x800. The EeePC has a 7-inch display with a resolution of 800x480.

Trackpad. The MBA is the first notebook in the Apple line-up to have the multitouch interface first seen on the iPhone and iPod touch. It allows you to scale and scroll using fingertip gestures on the pad. The EeePC uses a standard touchpad with scrolling capability.

Camera. Both units are shipped with a built in camera with similar resolutions (640x480).

Size. There is one of the most striking differences between the two. Although the MBA is very thin, its footprint is still the size of a regular MacBook, while the Eee PC is truly ultra-portable.

Weight. The EeePC weighs approximately 920 gm (2.1 lbs), while the MBA is just slightly heavier at 1.36 kg (3.0 lbs).

In this technical tell of the tape, the advantages and disadvantages of each device have been summed up. But in the end, it will still be the consumer's personal preference that will be the deciding factor.

Some users just need the power in their notebooks, and prefer the simplicity and upgradability of the EeePC. Yet, if you ask any Apple fanboy, you will only hear the opposite.

The choice is yours.

(The author is a medical doctor and a technology enthusiast. He has delved in all mobile operating systems. He also dabbles in reverse engineering technology to better understand how gizmos work.)

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LBC unit carves niche in imaging industry

By Rica T. Gichonara

DEVELOPING PHOTOS SOON on fast economy in this age of digital photography.

But one company under the LBC Express family is updating the service and is carving a niche in special image management services.

Take one quality service called Film-to-CD, which mainly caters to home enthusiasts to the mom-in.

Loses is defined as a photo captured without composing.

The process starts with the customer bringing in the negatives or any brands of Digiprint, the country's only print-and-do-love imaging company.

The branch sends the negatives via LBC Express to Digiprint's central hub, where technicians scan and digitize them to scan the images straight from the film negative.

The resulting digital images are burned to a CD or jukebox according to client specifications, and delivered via LBC Express right at the customer's doorstep.

Miguel Sicat, CEO of Digiprint-based owner LBC Imaging Services Inc., said in an interview that the company processes rolls and rolls of home negatives every day and has seen this number grow. Its digital-to-digital photo printing and special printing services.

"We are always on the lookout for what is now and what is the latest in the digital imaging industry," Sicat said.

But photo printing remains a major part of Digiprint's business, and the company has come up with new products to encourage people to develop their photos, instead of just keeping them in CDs.

One such product is the Storybook, created as a high-quality alternative to the traditional photo album and scrapbook.

The Storybook is composed of all your prints laid out in several pages, with the customer deciding the layout and special effects on every page.

Text and thought bubbles, much like in a comic book, can be added, all for free.

Instead of developing the pages, Digiprint "bakes" them into a hardbound compilation.

Where the Storybook comes out, all pages are as firm as the hardbound cover.

A Storybook ranges in price from P700 to P4,000, depending on the size and number of pages.

Sicat's compensation have sought the exact, said Sicat.

"Our big league basketball club ordered hundreds of copies of Storybooks detailing the championship win," Sicat said.

Another unique service of the company offers is Photo Engraving on wood.

This is made possible with Windows, a desktop laser cutting and engraving system that uses a CO2 laser cartridge.

The machine wanted in 2003 as small photo kiosks located inside LBC Express branches.

It initially offered rush printing for ID size prints, wallet size photos and film developing.

From a few locations, it has now grown to almost 70 branches nationwide with stand-alone outlets in malls and other high-traffic areas.

Digiprint has created a high-quality alternative to the traditional photo album.

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The success story of Philamlife—Part I

SO MANY PEOPLE MADE A positive difference in my life. Foremost among them are my parents, Jose Sr. and Magdalena Lanuza. Including me in the De La Salle University where I received an excellent elementary, secondary, and tertiary education. Together with the Christian Brothers, they were my best mentors during those formative years. From them I learned the virtues of hard work, discipline, honesty perseverance, and laziness, which shaped my character as well as my principles. I still recall what my father told me when I was in high school. "Jose, I may not have you reach in terms of material wealth but I will leave you a good name. Protect it and treasure it!" His words reminded me of the eulogized passage in the Book of Proverbs (22:1) "a good name is to be chosen rather than great riches." Regretfully my parents cannot be here to share this honor with me tonight because my Dad has gone on to the next life while my mother is bed ridden because of a stroke. But to them and to the Christian Brothers represented here by Br. Armin Luistro and Br. Gus Boquiz, I say again, "Thank you" from the bottom of my heart.

The early years

After leaving La Salle, like many college graduates at that time, I sought to build a proper foundation in the corporate world by joining a number of companies such as Procter & Gamble Philippines, the Ayala Investment and Development Corp., the Bonifacio Bank of Asia & Americas, and Union Bank. I am deeply indebted to these institutions for the sound management fundamentals they instilled in me during the early years of my career. I eventually moved on to other organizations and to the company I head today, but I am deeply grateful for the guidance and influence of my early employers and co-workers.

My public service stint

Shortly after the People Power Revolution in March 1986, President Cory Aquino invited me to assist her government by taking the helm of the Social Security System. That was the beginning of my stint in public service. My first task was to update the SSS records through computerization. Within two years we had cleared all the backlogs and became current in our billings to employers. A major reform measure I undertook was to get President Cory to amend the SSS charter to allow us to invest 10 percent of the state pension's investible funds to prime listed equities while the remaining 90 percent would be placed in loans to member's or still as investments to government securities and prime corporate bonds. Later on, we also allowed members to borrow from the SSS in order to invest in prime listed equities.

After serving four years in SSS administration, President Cory convinced me to head the Central Bank upon the recommendation of Governor John Bengzon. My first two years as CB governor were devoted to the restructuring of Philippine Commercial bank debt and strengthening the banking system as well as the international reserves of the Central Bank.

A major policy reform which the Monetary Board undertook was the partial lifting of foreign exchange controls in 1993 and 2002, to provide a more liberal foreign exchange environment. This move was favorably received by the international and local business communities and foreign funds poured into the local capital market. Subsequently, during the term of President Fidel V. Ramos, we worked on the passage of the bill creating the new Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas in order to have a more independent central bank. The BSP was also removed from the Salary Standardization Program of the government, thus allowing it to pay better compensation, particularly to the professional staff.

For their unqualified support and courage of the central bank's independence, I publicly acknowledge my sincerest debt of gratitude to President Cory and likewise to President FVR who was instrumental in convincing Congress to pass the bill creating the new BSP. I also thank IBC (Independent Pe Bancos) who, together with former Deputy Governor Reggie Regalado and myself, spent many hours explaining to members of Congress the rationale for setting up a new central bank. Lastly, I also thank my former SSS and CB colleagues for their support and cooperation in all of our undertakings.

Though I am no longer in the public sector, I believe it is the duty of every Filipino citizen to work for a better society. I am now involved in an advocacy to fight and eradicate corruption in government, which I believe is aligned with MAP's theme of "Country Above Self, Responsible Governance." The fight against corruption becomes more imperative after we have read and heard about the incredible stories of (mis)deeds of and rampant corruption in government. May I invite the MAP to join the Coalition Against Corruption, an aggregation of business and church groups together with NGOs which are engaged in a campaign to curb corruption so that we may leave a better country for our children.

The Philamlife story

To continue, gentlemen as I was then to respond to the call for public service, I inevitably needed to return to the private sector. In 1995 I became the president and chief executive officer of the Philippine American Life and General Insurance Co. I found myself deeply immersed and excited with my new company. Philamlife has now been my longest stint in any organization, almost 14 1/2 years, and I have absolutely no regrets on that record.

I believe one's accomplishments are reflective of the institutions one is privileged to serve, in the same way a body of water mirrors its surroundings. The house awarded me today is thus not mine alone. Rather it pays record if not greater tribute to the organization I currently represent. Please allow me, therefore, to now share the Philamlife story with you tonight.

Philamlife came into being in 1947 on the heels of the devastation of World War II. Our founder, Earl Carroll, God bless his soul, was an extraordinary man of vision. He articulated a clear and lofty business purpose—to have a Philamlife policy in every Filipino household. From the very beginning Mr. Carroll set our performance bar to such a height that he made sure it would endure well beyond his years and time. It would execute generations of Philamlifers. Into ordinary employees and sales people to the highest executives, with a sense of a vital yet still unfulfilled mission. The clarity of Mr. Carroll's all-compelling vision lives on, and because of this we feel we are still to our youthful years in an organization.

Mr. Carroll was the iconic face of Philamlife. He ran the company with operational touch, especially for the thousands of sales associates and agency leaders all over the country. Mr. Carroll was a tireless campaigner, crisscrossing our islands during those formative years of the '50s and '60s in order to establish the largest sales network ever seen in our industry in this day. Mr. Carroll called out of from "banana of savings" as that agency and policyholder alike would embrace the value of life insurance as an important means of mobilizing the small savings of millions of Filipinos to secure not only their welfare but to create long-term domestic capital for nation building. Such were the values that set the stage for Philamlife's unique corporate culture of never being large enough not to relate to all the people throughout the organization's vast nationwide network.

In its 60 years of existence, Philamlife has had only four presidents, compelling proof of our company's stability and longevity. From Mr. Carroll the baton of leadership was passed on to Cesar Zalaniza, Philamlife's first Filipino president. Mr. Zalaniza is to be credited with ensuring Philamlife's financial strength and integrity. Pursuing his career largely in the investment side of the company's operations, Mr. Zalaniza expertly established the fiduciary care and prudent financial practices that Philamlife is known for. He instilled in our people the conviction that we are neither irresponsible with our clients' money nor let them down on their expectations. To this day Philamlife imposes upon itself the toughest and most stringent financial controls, meeting if not surpassing regulatory standards. Perhaps for some, Philamlife may appear dull and tedious in terms of its business practices, but I can assure all our stakeholders they can sleep soundly at night with the full confidence that Philamlife will never take undue liberties with their hard-earned funds. This is the legacy that Mr. Zalaniza bequeathed upon Philamlife. (To be continued.)

(Speech delivered by the author who is president and CEO of Philippine American Life and General Insurance Co., when the 'MAP Management' idea of the year 2005" award was conferred on him recently. Feedback at map@globelines.com.ph.)

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BUSINESS Monday

Biggest thing since the 'bayong'

City of Pines uses biodegradable plastic bags

By Donna Domeville
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—"IT'S THE NEXT BIGGEST thing to the native 'bayong.'"

In the City of Pines, these plastic bags are now being used to 500 owned stores. But these are not ordinary plastic bags; they are biodegradable and they are Filipino-made.

Though exactly like ordinary plastic bags in appearance and feel, these bags are completely environment-friendly, containing no lead or metal.

"It looks like plastic but it is not plastic. It has zero lead content and zero metal content," Mayor Reinaldo Bautista Jr. said.

"It's very safe and it's biodegradable, and will fully disintegrate in six months or less. It recipe: corn powder and blends with the soil after a few months."

He said that the technology is very cheap since it is a Filipino technology.

The city council in 2007 passed an ordinance that prohibits business establishments from using plastic bags.

Bautista initialed the document to signed because he wants a gradual enforcement of the proposed restrictions until its full implementation in 2012.

The council has not yet amended the ordinance.

Bautista says the new retail bags mimicked SM's environmental programs for its 10th anniversary.

With SM now in the lead, other businesses would follow suit, he says, adding that SM alone accounts for some 60 percent of waste plastic bags in the city.

This, according to Bautista, is the first step to phasing out non-biodegradable packaging materials, particularly plastic bags, by 2012.

The city is the first in the country to promote the use of biodegradable plastics.

The technology comes in the wake of garbage disposal problems plaguing the city as the Irisan dumpsite here nears its maximum carrying capacity within the next six months and becomes more hazardous with high concentrations of methane gas in the area.

The city dumps around 100 tons of waste to its open dumpsite daily, 65 percent of which are biodegradable wastes.

While 79 percent of the 8.5-hectare dumpsite is already closed, covered with gravel and ready for rehabilitation, 30 percent of the area is serving as a temporary dumping site while the city looks for a suitable area for a sanitary landfill.

But with additional petitions coming from communities that may be affected if the city relocates its dumpsite in their area, it may yet be more than six months before the city finds a solution.

An option, according to Bautista, is to request Benguet Gov. Nestor Fongwan for a temporary arrangement for the city to dump its garbage in La Trinidad's landfill for a month.

Another is for the city to build retaining walls along cliffs and use them as temporary dumping grounds.

"IT LOOKS like plastic but it is not plastic. It has zero lead content and zero metal content."

"The minimum requirement for a lava[illegible] for Baguio is [illegible] households will be very far from this century [end][illegible], Bautista says.

Bautista, who recently arrived from a trip to the Novaliches sanitary landfill, cited Navotas, where fish ponds surround the dumping grounds.

"But there is no fish kill in Navotas," he says.

Weaving tradition with modern design needs

ABIGEL Hacelo is representative of Lubuagan, one of the five Kalinga municipalities that will be participating in the Kilay Festival at the SM Megamall for the fourth time.

LUBUAGAN, KALINGA, IS HOME to the preservers of the northern highlands culture for many centuries. Lubuagan is where you can find women with dexterous hands whose creative pieces reflect Kalinga's culture.

Basketry weaving is the skill of 90 percent of Balinga women, and the basketweave products from this tradition became a One Town, One Product (Otop) of the municipality. In basketcase weaving, women tie the knots around their waist while the other end is tied to a tree or post. This kind of traditional weaving makes the Kalinga woman remove a part of the loom.

Rina Marie Cabais, designer from Product Development and Design Center of the Philippines, assisted Lubuagan Weaving to create up with long designs that combined the traditional patterns of Kalinga and the functionality of modern designs. Most of the featured products used like pignant to symbolize the sky, and red dye for the earth, from which the world's grows. These colors are usually seen in kilos and gluten patterns (plate weave). Yellow is also dominant in the featured products, representing wealth, while the zigzag patterns represent mountains (which can be found in Baguio province), the home of the Lubuagan tribe. The stars and insects patterns are fertility symbols (usually seen in strawberry patterns).

Lubuagan Weaving is just one of the micro, small, and medium enterprises clustered in the National Trade Fair—one of the government's platforms to maximize the interests of local and foreign buyers in Filipino products.

This year, NTF will showcase over 900 new product designs from the 77 regions of the Philippines, starting March 11-15 at the SM Megatrade Hall of the SM Megamall.

NTF is organized by the Center for International Trade Exhibitions and Missions (Citem) with the OTI Regional Operations Group, Philippine Trade Training Center, Product Design and Development Center of the Philippines, Bureau of Domestic Trade, and the Bureau of Small and Medium Enterprise Development.

Fine dining at home? Hire a personal chef

SHIRLEY JAO WAS EIGHT YEARS OLD when she had her first hand in the kitchen. From the simple act of cooking rice, she began to cook traditional Filipino dishes under the tutelage of her late grandmother. Little did she know that this bonding moment between her and would prepare her for a career in the kitchen.

At the age of 12, Shirley developed her love for cooking while making dishes for both her family and friends. This passion was further developed when she took Fundamentals in Culinary Arts at the International School of Culinary Arts and Hotel Management (Escuela) in college.

Even though she graduated as a top student, Shirley knew there are more things she has yet to learn in cooking. She eventually took some short courses on Espresso 101 and Service and Operation Course from CCA and the hours of baking from Hershey Inoue. Apart from joining works, attending culinary seminars and training in the Mandarin Hotel in Makati for three years, she also traveled to different European and Asian countries to further improve her cooking skills.

It was also during those times that she started specializing in French and Italian cuisine, primarily because her children favored these foods during their travels. But no matter where she went and what culinary secrets she discovered, Shirley would never forget the Filipino dishes she had been cooking since the age of twelve. Thus, she would incorporate Filipino dishes in her menus and developed special fusion fares.

After years of experience as a chef, Shirley realized that it was time to try another challenge—to open her own restaurant. In 2000, her first restaurant called Jaobinos was born with the help of her family and friends, she and her four partners opened Citron Bagnet Bar and Restaurant Buffet.

Everything seemed to run smoothly for her, managing her first business while still looking after her family. In 2003, she opened an Asian restaurant called Jaobinos Fairways in Tagaytay which was operating, attracting people all the way from Manila and the nearby provinces. However, after a few years, she closed it down.

SHIRLEY Jao

"I closed it because I want to spend my time with my children." It was a tough choice, but Shirley knew it was for the best. Her Shirley still wants to convince her passion for cooking, but wanting another restaurant will compromise her time with her children. Still filled with the eagerness to cook world-class cuisine, she reinvitalized the idea of being a personal chef in private parties.

She started cooking for family friends until more and more people would contact her to cook for them. Shirley's culinary capacities in private parties made her the top choice for VIPs, all of whom enjoyed the meal she prepared for them.

"Having a professional chef is better because it is more personal. You can feel at home and get top-notch food and service at the same time." Shirley shares that not only is the concept more special, it is more practical as well. She convinces us it is the client and needs on their budget and need consequencing the quality of the food.

"It's still like eating in a fine-dining restaurant. You can also choose or suggest the right food for your guest."

IN THIS ISSUE
- 'Orosman at Zafira' is excellent theater /D4
- Raul Isidro's 48th solo opens this week /F4

LIFESTYLE
Critic Chris Baird Fortuna
Lifestyle Editor Gina B. Zubiaga

'Babe' author dives in with 'Water Horse'

DICK KING-SMITH IS BEST known as the creator of the beloved children's book, "Babe: The Gallant Pig," that was turned into an Oscar-winning movie picture.

A Glaswegian farmer for 20 years, he was perfectly placed to create the magical animal stories that enchant children and adults alike.

A prolific author, he has now written over a hundred books, including "The Water Horse," which Columbia Pictures is bringing to the screen in the fantasy adventure, "The Water Horse: Legend of the Deep."

Starring boy wonder Alex Etel and featuring special effects from Weta Workshop and Digital ("The Lord of the Rings"), "The Water Horse" is a tale of a lonely young Scottish boy named Angus who takes home

BOOK 2>

SMART infinity

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NOKIA N81
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- 16MB User Memory (Internal)
- 2.5" TFT QVGA Screen (Supports 16M colors)
- Video up to VGA (30 fps)
- Media Player

NOKIA Nseries

SMART

MICHAEL de Mesa in his KP Couture shop; Cza Dolan in her Mag.net shop; and Joyce Jimenez in her Private Joyce boutique.

New book profiles successful celebrity-entrepreneurs

THE "GO NEGOSYO BOOK of 50 Inspiring Entrepreneurial Stories Celebrity Edition," a compilation of inspiring stories featuring celebrities from show biz and the fashion industry, will be formally launched on March 2, 6 p.m., at the Music Hall of SM Mall of Asia.

Published by the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship (PCE) headed by Jose "Joey" Concepcion III, founder of food and beverage conglomerate RFM Corporation, the book seeks to motivate and inspire readers with how the country's favorite celebrities invested their money wisely on businesses that have paid off handsomely.

Entrepreneurs behind of Asia Brewery Wishmi Bio before the "fantastic Lotion" portion of the book. The celebrities are photographed by Jon de Leon.

The PCE's mission is to promote an entrepreneurial mindset among Filipinos. Its 2008 theme "Go Negosyo, Angat sa Kahirapan."

Here are some of the celebrities featured:

Cesar Montano. Aside from being a filmmaker, Cesar also owns Bellissimo, an Italian restaurant which opened in July 2007. The cozy restaurant serves as an outlet for his passion for cooking. And being a resident artist in numerous galleries in the Metro, commissioned to do around 100 paintings a year, the restaurant also serves as his mini gallery. On top of these, Cesar is also the proprietor of a mango farm in Pandi, Bulacan, and of the Montano Purified Water company, which supplies drinking water in his home province, Bohol. What is the secret to being successful in diverse forms of enterprises? For Cesar, it is simple: "Is love to start with: passion, love and good intention."

Joyce Jimenez. The actress has established Private Joyce, a boutique of intimate lingerie, swimsuits and fragrances.

Cza Dolan. Cza and her husband, artist Roch Dolan, owns Mag.net, a chain of magazine stores. Cza also owns Mag.net Galleries and Café, an artists' sanctuary where contemporary art is exhibited.

Michael de Mesa. With his passion for dogs, the actor has a business called K9 Couture, a shop which provides pooches with food and grooming, clothing, footwear, stylish travel bags and even pet furniture.

Ogie Alcasid. He first set up the Ogie Doggie cart in Market! Market! at the Bonifacio Global City in 2004 and reaped P56,000 on its first day. Seeing the brand continues to grow, and his being a celebrity obviously helped in the promotion of Ogie Doggie.

Gary Valenciano. Unknown to many, the multitalented engineered sound systems of the Araneta Coliseum and Beyond—concerts last year were provided by a company restructured by no less than Gary Valenciano himself. He also has a talent management firm that's his wife, Angeli, and to also runconcert productions.

Vina Morales. In 1998, the actress and her sister, Sheila Morales, established Trails Salon, which now has 10 branches nationwide.

DIETHER Ocampo in his publishing office, which publishes UNO men's mag. Marinel Ann Jarlo to Rosales Dolino Use his own production company.

Jericho Rosales. Aside from being one of the country's most bankable actors, the actor also owns a production company called Silverscreen, which produces albums, concerts and music videos for aspiring stars and music advocates who wish to make it big in the music industry. To date, Silverscreen has already produced a concert, two music videos and two albums.

Heidi Belo and Griselda Herrera. The business co-owners-cum-sisters has established Indulgent Skin Care, the company that handles product lines under the Belo Essentials brand. Her daughter, Griselda Herrera, is its managing director. Belo Essentials is already being sold in more than 2,500 stores nationwide, surpassing its target of 800 stores.

Diether Ocampo. In 2003, the matinee idol put up 5-UNO Publishing Co., Inc. 5 Lead, which has since produced the successful UNO Magazine. "I was proud at showcasing to (advertisers) that our magazine was 100 percent Filipino produced, a good product, and it's everything that a modern guy needs," he says.

Other celebrities in the book include Abby De Leon, Ryn Mulach, Albert Martinez, Angel Locsin, Lito Espiritu, Chechel Jimon, Miller Arenga, Noel Manuspat, Ana Mina, Jessel Ignacio, Aubrey Miles, Ben Valdes, Hyapsy Dagpacan & siblings Wenn Deramas, Dingdong Dantes, Dennis Orbea, Dimples Romana and Jessy Mendiola, Drew Arellano, Kirk Meril, Pancay Serrano, Jeffrey Hidalgo, Joel Torre, Julius Magtanggol, Judy Ann Santos, Ryan Agoncillo, Beth Lorenzo, Lorna Tolentino, Manilyn Reynes, Mariel Rodriguez, Marvin Agustin, Monsour Del Rosario, Pedro Bedaño, Patrick Ramon Diaz, Piliro Gonzalez, Quark Henares, Jk & Wig Pamela, Jenny and Jessie Pearce, Lia Martinez, Angel Aquino, Regine Velasquez, Sam Milby, Karl Yune, Joey Reyes, Tessa Prieto-Valdez, Tim Yap, Tonite Reverala, Tina Marticelo Gozalvez, and Yeoseob De Leon.

Call the PCE Secretariat, 637-0220, or visit www.gonegosyo.net.

UST Cinevita features 'Foster Child,' 'Tirador,' 'Tribu,' 'Endo,' 'Barako'

CELEBRATING LIFE, TRUTH, and faith, The Tomasinos, the 90-year-old student publications of the University of Santo Tomas, will hold the 2008 Cinevita Film Festival on March 14 to 17, at the Thomas Aquinas Research Center auditorium, UST Espana, Manila.

Now set to second year, Cinevita will showcase independent films, documentaries, and shorts from amateur to distinguished Filipino filmmakers. Among the roster of the various films to be screened are Stefanie Weinstein's "Foster Child" and "Tirador," Raisil Flavier "Still Life," Jim Libiran's "Tribu," Jade Castro's "Endo," Neil Dimayuga' "Barako," Joey Mclaren's "Bamboo ng Lipunan" and a documentary by UST Sharing sessions.

International films will also be featured in the festival such as Lloyd Kramer's "Five People You Meet in Heaven," Vincent Ward's "What Dreams May Come," and Mr. an Leslie's "Pay it Forward."

Directors Jerrold Tarog, Adolfo Alix, Jesse and Marcelino Ibañez will grace the event. Philippine Daily Inquirer's entertainment columnist and Inicine.com Special editor Nestor Torre will deliver the keynote speech.

Cinevita is a non-profit and educational endeavor of the Tomasinos together with the UST Institute of Religion, UST Journalism Society, UST Literary Society, and UST Consilium Philosophicum. All documentaries and local films are open to the public. Foreign full-length films are exclusive to lecturers, film critics, and students. Admission is free.

Call 406-1611 local 8235 or contact JC Cordova at 0905-4255778 or 0906-3100262.

Book club focuses on Ian McEwan's 'Atonement'

A SYMPHONIC NOVEL OF LOVE AND war, childhood and class, guilt and forgiveness provides all the satisfaction of a brilliant narrative and the provocation we have come to expect from the master of prose.

"Atonement" presents author Ian McEwan at his most closely observed and psychologically penetrating, as well as at his most moving and expansive. It came out to be a gifted literary treasure, the tale's first part ushers readers into a domestic crisis that becomes a crime story centered around an event that changes the lives of **half a dozen people in an upper-middle-class country home.**

On a hot summer day in 1935, 13-year-old Briony Tallis witnesses a moment's flirtation between her older sister, Cecilia, and Robbie Turner, the son of a servant and Cecilia's childhood friend. But Briony's hyperactive grasp of adult motives, coupled with her rather precocious literary gifts, brings about a crime that will change all **their lives.**

As the novel traces that crime's repercussions through the chaos of World War II and into the latter part of the twentieth century, it engages the reader on every conceivable level, with an ease and authority that mark it as a genuine masterpiece.

Inner Ian McEwan's world and get 10 percent off on Penerbooks' featured book for February. The critically acclaimed novel will be discussed on Feb. 29, 7 p.m., at Penerbooks Ortigas.

Call Penerbooks Specialty Store Ortigas at 943-1581 to 82.

'Babe' author dives in with 'Water Horse'

From page E1

a mysterious, magical egg he finds on the beach, and soon finds himself raising an amazing creature: the mythical "water horse" of Scottish lore. As he tries to hide his friend, with the help of Crewe, Angus begins a journey of discovery, preserving a secret that gives birth to a legend.

Dick King-Smith says that he was particularly delighted to portray the story of a young boy's connection to the world around him. "I think what intrigues people about the story is the mystery," he says.

"No one really knows for sure if the water horse is there, no one knows what it's going to look like. You can let your imagination run riot; I think that's the fun of it. I think that the appeal of this story is its simplicity; this is a straightforward story about the relationship between a family of human beings and one strange individual animal and the effect it has on the family."

King-Smith says that there is another aspect of the story that has stayed with him. "I think there is a common theme that runs through my animal stories: courage," says the author.

"It can be physical courage or moral courage, but in my stories, an animal is confronted with a predicament or trouble of some sort, but wins through by sheer determination. That's a theme that intrigues me."

King-Smith's books have sold over five million copies in the United Kingdom and been translated into 11 languages. The movies, "Babe" and "Babe: Pig in the City," and the TV adaptation of "The Queen's Nose" increased his popularity even further.

In 2001, King-Smith's autobiography, "Chewing the Cud," was published to great acclaim.

"We desperately want to believe there is magic in the world, and that is why the legend of Loch Ness has captured our imagination for generations," says "Water Horse" director Jay Russell.

"I look for stories that say something about the human spirit, and Dick King-Smith's books are great examples of that. I'm fascinated by our place on earth and all the other creatures we share it with us and how we can learn to live in harmony. Because this tale taps into the universal themes of magic and friendship, it applies to anyone of any age. It really is a film for everyone. It is for kids on one level, for their parents on another, and for their grandparents on yet another."

Opening across the Philippines on Feb. 27, "The Water Horse: Legend of the Deep" is distributed by Columbia Pictures, local office of Sony Pictures Releasing International.

ETEL (left) stars as Angus MacMorrow, with Crowe, the title character.

Stephen King's phantom pain

By Raoul S. De Vera

CONSIDERING HOW much has happened to Stephen King, it is easy to be spooked by the thought that writing horror really isn't for the faint-hearted.

After overcoming substance abuse early in his career, King figured in a horrific roadside accident in Maine in 1999.

Instead of enfeebling him, however, the accident has overturned him, as King has written more and written better since.

"Duma Key" (Scribner, New York, 2008, 611 pages) is the horror master's astonishing 60th novel and one of his best ever.

Hoodoo contractor Edgar Freemantle's life goes totally off the rails when he loses his arm in a freak construction-site accident, making him forgetful, often incapable of proper speech, and full of spiteful rage.

After his wife asks for a divorce, Freemantle opts for a change in scenery and lands in a house he calls Big Pink, on a secluded, overgrown island called Duma Key in Florida. There, he hears strange sounds.

"I only know that something was going on for me," he thinks. "Inside me. Sometimes it felt a little scary. Sometimes it felt pretty goddam wonderful."

There, he begins painting, filling one canvas after another, visions of sunsets and ships, accompanied by rock music and a red flame. Each irresistible urge to paint is heralded by a powerful itch where his arm used to be, and, immediately after, he feels something else. "I was hungry. Ravenous."

Freemantle meets the denizens on the island, becoming quick friends with the eccentric caretaker Wireman and the troubled old lady Elizabeth Eastlake, owner of Duma Key. He has a nagging feeling that isn't random. "The ideas of us were here because something wanted us here."

His paintings grow beautiful and powerful. "That was when something changed. That was when something dark slipped in."

Freemantle is shocked when his paintings detail people he has never met and things he cannot have known but are both real and true. He finds out he can do even more through the paintings, terrible and terrific things. "The feeling of those Duma pictures was furious, barely held in check, horror waiting to happen. Lukewarm on canvas nails."

There is really scary in the first 300 or so pages of "Duma Key," but then you can feel it start to subside away at the edges of your attention, slithering at the periphery, waiting. Three-fourths of the way in, it seeps out of the shadows and everything clicks into useful place, as King remarks as ruby: "Because ink is magic, and acid all magic is white. Not even for little girls."

What follows is heartbreaking loss and an urgent, surprisingly action-packed denouement that will keep readers up, pondering what washes out from the sea at night and visits men's homes.

King invests more of himself in this book. While his other novels are usually based in New England (King resides mostly in Maine), "Duma Key" reflects the fact that King now also lives in Florida, hence this book's setting. Here he revisits a favorite theme: what happens when a person suffers tragedy and copes through art. In fine, "Duma Key" bears many similarities to "Bag of Bones."

But this is a more potent, more terrifying book. King juxtaposes the events in Freemantle's life with cryptic interventions on "How to Draw a Picture" that soon becomes horribly clear: "Don't be afraid to draw the secret things," the book whispers.

By far, this is the King book that features the most memorable supporting characters, particularly the Spanish-speaking, trivia-dispensing Wireman. In contrast, the narrator Freemantle, while effective, is almost identical to equivalent characters from "Bones."

In recent years, King talked of retirement even as his work was being made into movies, television projects and comic books, yet it remains clear he is still best experienced in book form.

'Duma Key' is a complex and chilling testament to the harrowing link between tragedy and art

A new high point from a writer at the peak of his powers, "Duma Key" is a complex and chilling novel that no comic or mini-series can properly illustrate, a book that makes you want to start painting and also to never paint at all, leaving readers intoxicated and terrified by a reminder that all art has a price.

Available in hardcover from National Book Store.

'Coaching' author in Manila for book-signing, seminar

LEADERSHIP CONSULTANT, facilitator, author and speaker Thomas Crane is in town for a book-signing of his best-selling "The Heart of Coaching," on March 1, 7 p.m., at PowerBooks Greenbelt.

The event is in partnership with the ITD Group, which will be hosting Crane's two-day seminar, "The Heart of Coaching: Creating Coaching Culture for Outstanding Results," at The Peninsula Manila on March 2-4.

Call 8077028, e-mail info@itd.com.ph or visit www.itd.com.ph.

Crane is PowerBooks' Author of the Month. PowerBooks has branches at Greenbelt 4 (tel. 7576426 to 28); SM Megamall (6353898 to 99); Alabang Town Center (8080068 to 69); Glorietta 3 (752-7075); Shangri-La (6388020/25); Robinson's Place Manila (3072003); SM Mall of Asia (556-0244); Festival Supermall (6508231); Trinoma (9431581/82); and SM Cebu (032-2309868/69).

THOMAS Crane

Bigger Cebu glossy

ZEE LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE, the only glossy magazine published outside Metro Manila, has been reformatted into a bigger mag—8 by 12 inches.

Its new editor is Cybill Gayatin.

Zee has released its February/March Design issue, with multi-awarded Cebuano furniture designer Kenneth Cobonpue on the cover.

Featured are Our Kind family's stained-glass legacy; Acoje Chico's 25th G Fine Art Gallery; architect and environmental planner Jay Gonzaga Cobonpue's Interiority spread on Brad Pitt's Malibu house; and many more.

The Cebu-based magazine, which has a special Divine section, is available at PowerBooks, Fully Booked and National Book Store. Call 63 32 2332638 or visit www.zeelifestyle.com.

Collection of fast fiction

PHILIPPINES PUBLISHING INC. has released "Mga Kuwentong Paspasan," an anthology of short, short fiction in Filipino edited by Vicente Garcia Groyon. This is a companion volume to "Very Short Stories for Harried Readers," a flash fiction anthology in English that was also edited by Groyon. The two volumes contain different stories written by different authors.

Flash fiction, or sudden fiction, fits our hectic lives today like a glove. Since we all have little time for reading between working, commuting in heavy traffic, texting, mailing, surfing the Internet, e-mailing and watching numerous channels on cable TV, we can remain literate and cope with very short fiction.

The 30 stories in this book are each completed in one to four pages. All of the stories, however, evoke complete and complex worlds with remarkable speed and economy of words. The stories can be read a few minutes at a time while eating breakfast, sitting on the bus, on buses, trains, or taxis, during a coffee break, or just before going off to sleep. They are to be savored, savored and returned to again and again in quick bursts of reading. They will remain in the reader's mind forever because of their high quality and remarkable imagination.

The contributors in this volume are young, accomplished writers who have won a number of literary awards. The stories they have created are at the cutting edge of contemporary writing and are among the best short fictions in Filipino today.

Vicente Garcia Groyon, the editor, has published a novel, "The Sky over Diman," and a collection of short stories, "On Cursed Ground and Other Stories," both of which were awarded the Manila Critics Circle National Book Award. "The Sky over Diman" won the Palanca Grand Prize for the novel. Groyon teaches with the Department of Communication at the De La Salle University in Manila.

"Mga Hiwaswirang Nuimanti" is available at all Anvicted Book Stores, PrintWorks, Books for Less and other major book stores in P450 per copy.

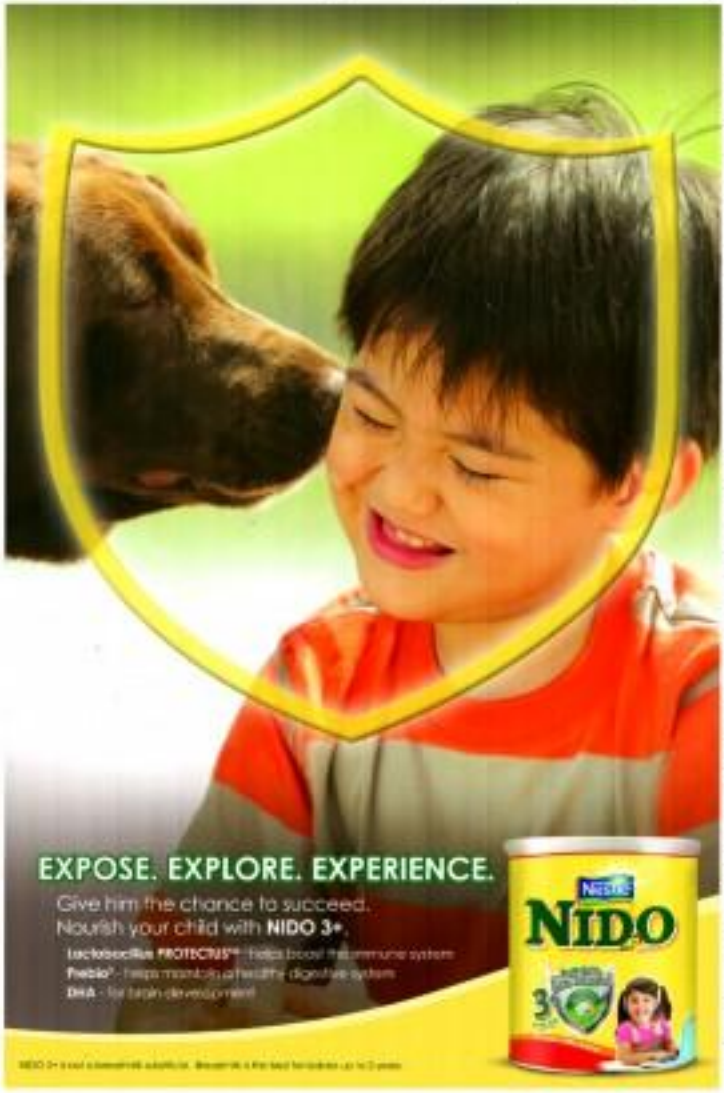
Call 7234411 or e-mail millicent@philmi.net.

Book sale

NATIONAL BOOK STORE is holding the big book discount clearance sale on 15 March 10.

Items up to 75 percent on selected imported titles such as the best selling "Village" series (Mediaeval, Pharmacology and Drugs), Encyclopedia and Study Guides up to 75 percent on all NBS branches nationwide.

Child Development Expert Encourages Parents to Expose, Explore, Experience



Dr. Liliane Gaerlan

Three Areas of Development

Intellectual training, skills such as (not) only refine cognitive ability (which is just one aspect of a child's total development). A child has three domains or development – physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional. The goal of education, at home and in school, should be to equally nurture and develop all three. This is where expressive exploration and experience come in.

Expose

Discovery is part of your child's learning process, so expose your pre-schooler to a variety of materials and activities that can stimulate his body, mind and feelings. This naturally provides him with a safe but stimulating environment so that you can confidently watch over him from a distance.

Provide him with age-appropriate toys and materials, rich in texture and color. Not only will this help to accelerate manipulative fine motor, he will also learn concepts such as shape, size and number. Better yet, let the child of similar age to play along so that he can learn social skills such as sharing and waiting for his turn.

Explore

Pre-school children are capable of running, (or) jumping, but still need to develop their fine motor skills. Encourage your child to take part in role play that makes use of sand, water, facial paints and play dough to get his finger muscles working. As he explores with these materials, don't tell him what to do. Instead, let him respond to discoveries creative he is.

Outside of the home, there are other child-friendly venues where he can also explore and learn – a children's museum, a kiddie gym, or a kinder-size bank creating trips allow your child to socialize in a relaxed environment with fresh faces. He gets to meet people from all walks of life and becomes aware of the larger society of which he is a part.

Experience

Learning doesn't take place only in the classroom, so allow your child to play in different environment – the sandbox, the beach, or the garden. Encourage him to work with his hands and discover for himself the concepts of (in) and out, wet and dry, rough and smooth. Involve adults like living along a few kids as well. Your child will see every step from his home (double) however such as cooperation and empathy – skills that he will need in order to form and maintain friendships.

Expose your child to a safe, healthy and stimulating environment so that he can explore freely and encounter the world around him. Give him the chance to succeed.

Let him grow. Let him go.

Dr. Liliane Gaerlan is a Professor in the Department of Family Life and Child Development, College of Home Economics (UP Diliman). A member of the Filipino Family and Child Development Foundation, she is also a sufficient author and single-dad mother of several young (all real) child development conferences and seminars.

LIFESTYLE

Virtuosos in a time of 'upheaval'

By Antonio Ma. Guerrero
Contributor
Photos by Jim Gotoy Paredes

IN A TIME OF "POLITICAL UPheaval," as one media person put it, what is the role of a semi-government institution like the Cultural Center of the Philippines?

During the open forum, CCP president Nestor G. Jardin rose to answer the question. "Corruption is embedded not just in the government but in the system," he declared, somewhat joking those present although what he said was hardly new. "As individuals, we are very much concerned about our economy."

"But," he continued, "the CCP through its programs can be a potent tool for social transformation. We have to be proactive."

Through performances, events and dialogues, Jardin said, "we teach moral val-

PHOTOGRAPHS D2

TEATRO Andrulaxan and Jaime, Chiang Kai Shek College Youth Choir

CLARISSA Deanon

NOLYN Catoling

JOSEPHO Cinco Toledo

It didn't rain on Bravo Filipino parade

BRAVO FILIPINO, THE FESTIVAL series of Philippine art, music and fashion, opened last Feb. 10 with a rousing concert at the Greenbelt 5 gardens, Ayala Center.

The show threatened to rain, but that did not dampen the enthusiasm of the performers or of the audience. The show went on without a hitch. In the end, the audience gave the performers a standing ovation.

Bravo Filipino, which will run until April, is the brainchild of Ayala chair emeritus Jaime Zobel de Ayala.

"Every day I discover new talent and new enthusiasm in the Filipino soul," he said. "What I said is that we have to want to see someone succeed abroad to give that person a name, and first we go all out to honor that person. And as I thought, we should start to discover each artist here, and make them famous with the whole country supporting them."

The opening concert highlighted music from the Filipino Heritage Library's library collection, as arranged by Ryan Cayabyab and Lucio Dominguez.

A powerhouse cast of Filipino vocalists and musicians performed the arrangements: Pilita Corrales, Basil Valdez, Celeste Legaspi, and Penaya Magsisoma.

The concert also featured several dance numbers choreographed by instructors from Leda Zobel's Ateya Dance Studio.

Showcasing classical and contemporary masterpieces in Philippine art, music and fashion, the festival will feature both seasoned artists and talented newcomers.

Other highlights of the festival include a photo exhibit featuring 36 artworks from different photographers, including Frankie Callaghan, Hayley Concepcion, Johann Espiritu, Gideon Lacsamana, Kix Zobel, Quincy Castillo, Emil Durveni, Patche Escoler and Ewin Figarola.

The exhibit, "F Photographers Shared Moods," will run March 26-April 4 at the Greenbelt 5 lobby.

On March 21, a fashion show at the Greenbelt 5 Activity Walk will highlight the designs of icons Ramon Valera, Salvacion Higgins, Roy Custodio, Wiwi Moreno, Pam Bernales, Monti Alonzo, Neil Bruce and Pitik Tesoro; volunteers from Ateya, Anggie Cordova and Cesar Gaspar; and accessories designer Bobi Velasco. Tess Mankekar Dumpa and Bea Valdes.

A special fashion show to be staged at the Greenbelt 5 Gallery on March 27, will give this a special preview of the Manumano collection of London-based Filipino designer Cooley Medes.

Call (02) 3661 or e-mail bravofilipino@filipinolibrary.org.ph for more information.

HUBIDAL arranges Louie Ocampo and Ryan Cayabyab join.

RACHEL Alejandro belts out a number

FRANCIS Magsisoma performs a patriotic rap.

ASIAN family and Ayala Group led by chairman emeritus Jaime Zobel de Ayala (left) give hearty applause to concert.

THE HIGHLIGHT of the night is a medley of Filipino songs performed by Celeste Legaspi, Pilita Corrales and Basil Valdez.

CRIS Villonco

Ballet Manila holds audition for scholarships

TAKE THE first step to be a "storyteller on tour" as Ballet Manila conducts auditions for scholarship on Saturday, March 1, at Studio 1 of the Ballet Manila School, 1915 Doroteo St., Pasay City.

Auditions are open to all aspiring dancers, 11-20 years old, with a minimum of one year ballet experience for girls, while boys need not have previous dance training.

Girls' attire shall be tights, leotards and ballet shoes. Boys may come in jogging pants and T-shirt.

Registration is ongoing until March 1.

Audition and registration fee is P200.

Call 7255067 or 4000282. E-mail info@balletmanila.ph.

CARMELA Lopez Hidoso

Ben Quebral

Virtuosos in a time of 'upheaval'

From page B1

ure to the south, the value of honesty, respect for the truth and what is right."

The occasion was a music press conference at the CCP to announce the third "Virtuosos (2010, Sound Through Time," to be held at the CCP on Feb. 28, 8 p.m. The concert is becoming an annual event sponsored by BDO Pavilion, a leading international bank known for its support of the arts.

Operatic music

The first "Virtuosos" in 2008 featured two symphony orchestras and a galaxy of pianists, while the second single-piano virtuosos. The current duo this year will showcase operatic music.

"We hope to raise P2 million for our arts program for young people," Jardin said. The fund currently stands at P1 million, the beneficiaries being 68 young scholars in the fields of music, dance, theater, literature, and visual art. All are graduates of the Philippine High School for the Arts.

The season will highlight songs and arias from the baroque, classical and romantic periods in music, roughly from the 17th to the 19th century.

Performers are soprano Camille Lopez, tenors soprano Cristina Ocampo, tenors Randy Calunga and Dodjie Calunday, countertenor Wish Anthony Gaspin (better known as the chairman of the Philippine Madrigal Singers), and bass-baritones Jonathan Zarate and Jessie Corteza, the latter a guest artist from France.

They will be complemented by the Philippine Madrigal Singers, Chung Kai Shek College Branch Choir, Ballet Philippines, and Tonyo Arthaizum from Ormoral Santos City.

Singers' virtuosity

Composer Chino Toledo directs the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra.

During the pianists, Solomon, Gaspin and Ocampo gave the media a foretaste of what awaits the audience on Feb. 28, as they rendered delectable French and Italian arias. Pianist Mary Anne Lopez was the collaborating artist.

"The program will showcase the virtuosity of the singers," said Mirasol Manansag, chief of the CCP Music Division. Among those present were Claude Imbert and Wee Gabriel of BDO Pavilion, and Olivier Dubrugue, director of Alliance Francaise de Manille.

RANDY Gaspin

JÉRÔME Correia

PHILIPPINE Philharmonic Orchestra

PHILIPPINE Madrigal Singers

Euphoria for Liszt and Rachmaninoff in Dipolog City

By Felix R. Tarroza
Contributor

CLASSICAL MUSIC got a much-needed shot in the arm in Dipolog City, Zamboanga del Norte, when over 800 students from different schools in this city cheered pianists Ingrid Sala Santamaria and Reynaldo Reyes Friday last week on their 15th Romantic Piano Concerto Journey Tour.

Held at the Atrium of Top Plaza Hotel with a view of the sea, Santamaria and Reyes played Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 2 and Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 and were rewarded with a standing ovation.

"We are really excited because this is our first time to reach a classical concert," said academic Jane Kristi Fonseca, Prince Rooyel Lago and Kathleen Alfonso from the Dipolog Pilot Elementary School. "Before this, we only had exposure to rock bands like Bamboo and Gracenote," they added.

For this rare classical event in the city, 10 seats were lifted to receive two spotlight pianos in the fifth floor of the hotel through the stairs.

Moving good pianos

"The piano concerto, part of the ordeal is still finding and moving good pianos and it's problematic if the elevator can't accommodate the pianos," said Lucille Tiamzon, who supervised the piano transport.

A piano tuner from Cebu came all the way to Dipolog City to tune the two pianos.

After the open forum, where the visiting artists answered questions on how to get started as good concert pianists, Santamaria and Reyes got the surprise of their lives when they were mobbed by autograph-seekers. The avalanche of disbelieving new fans of classical music took more than half an hour to subside, with international artists posing for picture-taking with the artists.

Treated like rock stars

"Don't it's a good while, it feels good to be treated like rock stars," said Santamaria, who once shared the stage with Dame Margot Fonteyn and Rudolf Nureyev in Cesar Franck's Symphonic Variations in the now-demolished Floral Theater in Makati City.

"It's an honor to welcome world-class musicians in our city," Dipolog City Mayor Evelyn T. Uy told the visiting artists.

The city's tourism office and Top Plaza Hotel, under manager Rosanna Uy, sponsored the matinee and gala performances, which drew unprecedented attendance especially from young audiences newly exposed to classical music.

Rare encounters

Known as the "Bottled-Sardines Capital of the Philippines," Dipolog City, with a population of over a 100,000, has rare encounters with classical music but a few music studios keep classical music alive.

A unique model in music home-schooling in the city is the family of visual artist Jimbo "Tolit" Romano, whose wife Merlinda teaches piano along with son Mario Daniel, 23, and daughter Mirsels, 20. The youngest son, Michael, 8, already plays Bach's Three-Part Inventions and Haydn's Concerto in D Major.

All the Romano children are homeschooled from elementary to college.

Homeschooling

"Homeschooling is now the trend even in the United States," said Reyes, who stressed that college graduates with background in classical music had easier chances of getting jobs than those without music conversance.

"With homeschooling specially in music, the teacher can give more attention to the needs of the students without the bad examples seen in regular schools. When homeschooling works, it works best not just in music but even in regular academic subjects," he added.

Upon arrival, the visiting artists together with the special persons crowning the concert were treated to Beethoven's Sonatina by Michael Romano. Later, Santamaria took the second piano in an impromptu performance of the last movement of the Haydn D Major Concerto, with Michael as soloist.

Music greats

Surprisingly the youngest musician also plays the violin. He also wowed the Manila visitors in an impromptu Rosario by Bach.

The tour resumed in Tagum City, Davao del Norte, with a performance in the University of Mindanao (UM) and in the Tagum City Cultural and Trade Center, under the auspices of the tourism and city mayor's office. In Davao City, the concert was held in the Marco Polo Hotel lobby lounge and the SM Ecostis Center, courtesy of Dennis Arejola.

The tour concluded at the Concert in the Park in Manila, where music lovers asked questions after the Liszt and Tchaikovsky concertos.

"I've seen music grows in Manila and Hong Kong and I can say that you belong among them," music lover Oscar Garcia told Santamaria and Reyes during the open forum.

The 13th Romantic Piano Concerto Journey has logged a total of 280 concerts since it started in 2001.

Cecile Licad tour

World-acclaimed Filipino pianist Cecile Licad will impress the music for young musicians and abused children when she plays with new talents of the Philippine Youth Symphonic Band and the Pandayan Filipino Youth Symphonic Band in a special outreach tour on March 11 at the Miriam College Auditorium, March 13 in San Antonio, Zambales; and March 16 at the Ayala Malolos Eusebio Liu Auditorium.

Outreach concerts

In these outreach concerts, Licad will be soloist in Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 2.

Presented by Cmir. Ian Miljan's Pandayan Festival and the Philippine Youth Symphonic Band led with the ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc. as special partner, the special Licad tour will raise scholarship funds for developing talents in the rural areas, and for the training program for the development of wind and brass players for the Philippine Youth Symphonic Band.

The outreach concerts will also benefit Bantay Bata 163 and its Children's Village fund for music and arts therapy.

The rest of the program includes Kreisler's Pantalonne and Allegro; Vivaldi's "Spring" from "The four Seasons"; Mozart's Serenade in B Flat for 13 Winds in K.361; Haydn's Farewell Symphony; and Dvorak's Serenade Op. 44.

For ticket reservations, call 411-8806 (Pandan), 9209867 (Chino), 426-1552 (Evelyn Cullen); and 0917-8008727 (Bobal).

Tribute to Gregorio

Emmanuel Gregorio panel away on Jan. 28. Married to pianist-harpist Lourdes de Leon Gregorio, Manny, as he was known to friends, debuted as the pianist-singer in Felipe Padilla de Leon's "Walk Me Tenderly" at the PEU Auditorium.

He also played solos in Albinoni Bonnevaux's "Sleepy Gliding," "Maria Mahlday" and "Princess Orchids."

Abroad, he essayed the role of Landgraf in Wagner's "Tannhauser" to Taipei and the part of Gala in Borodin's "Prince Igor," Bufal in "Rustics and Ladmilla" and Papageno in "Magic Flute" – all in Jota Frankovic, USA.

A special tribute for Manny Gregorio, called "Moment Musicale," will be held on Feb. 27 at the home of Celeste Abaunza.

Piano for sale

An A.K. Rawsil piano (6 ft x 3 inches, ebony black gloss finish with mellow/brilliant sound and excellent touch), that which had been used by Filipino and international artists, is up for sale and can be inspected Monday to Saturday, 2-5 p.m. Call 8908-31 84278.

PIANIST Ingrid Sala Santamaria is swamped by new young fans of classical music in Dipolog City.

After the open forum, pianists Santamaria and Reyes got the surprise of their lives when they were mobbed by autograph-seekers

THE MUSICAL Romano family of Dipolog City: (from left) siblings Mario Daniel, Mirsels, Michael, Rosalie "Didi" and Marinela "Lucha" Romano. They prove that home-schooling works best not just in music but in regular academic studies.

DIPOLOG City Mayor Evelyn T. Uy (center) with visiting pianists Ingrid Sala Santamaria (left) and Reynaldo Reyes (right), son Timothee, media persons Dida Jurado, Sun Ocay and the author

SCENE from Dulaang UP's production of Francisco Balagtas's "Orosman at Zafira," directed by Dante Lamiz

Dance of the damned

By Gilda Cadiz

Dulaang UP's reconfigured 'komedya' 'Orosman at Zafira' is the first great production of the year

DANCE AS THE BASIS OF THEATER. Not text, not setting, but postures and movements—actions that both look to ancient rituals or ancient evenings, when stories were told and myths formed around campfires by a tribe's designated dance storytellers.

The pioneering drama theoretician Antonin Artaud had early criticism in 1931, when he glimpsed a performance of a Balinese dance in Paris and grasped the possibility of theater freed from the sovereignty of text or the willfulness of actors. A form of drama that gave pride of place to spectacle, rhythmicking, thought made visible—the fusion of sensual and elegant footnotes theater of a visceral, elemental purity.

If he were alive today and by any chance living in Manila, Artaud would probably look with kindly eyes on "Orosman at Zafira," a surreal reimagined version of the colonial-era komedya that director-choreographer Dodot Jaime has brought to Wilfredo Ilio Guerrero Theater in UP Diliman with blazing life and ingenuity.

"Orosman at Zafira" first remains the scribbling man, centuries Tagalog of Francisco Balagtas; its structure the familiar mass-move mold of warring groups clashing to the sound of music and the beat of precise choreography.

The language, spoken by a large cast of professional and student actors, is largely freehand of declamatory artifice, in presumptuous poetry crackling with exuberance and transparency.

BORDER: Carnelag as Bendaram, Lee Marcos as Abdallah

In its storyline, "Orosman" makes a present-day case that Balagtas, a figure of bland verse to millions of students required to read his archaic poetry, can be accessible, compelling, relevant spoken aloud.

ABOVE: Cris Villonco as Zafira, Arnaiz Reyes as Orosman. Left: Mario Ponce as Zafira

Dark and gritty

Due to likely, however, to give more space in one's mind to how this play veers much further away from the conventional komedya into altogether novel territory—one darker, grittier, more ground-breaking in its desire to confound the predictable.

For readers, this "Orosman" is as much drama as it is dialogue. In electrifying displays of movement is this play's most glittering achievement.

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Dante, who has made a name for himself as a choreographer (he created the movement for, among others, New Voice Company's "Into the Woods" and "Cabaret"; Metropolitan Theater Guild's "A Midsummer Night's Dream"; Dulaang UP's "G. Lesos Lewis Dean Filipinas...The Musical"; and Atlantis Productions' "Dream and Our Brass") paints "Orosman's" mostly Shakespearean tale of bloodline, revenge, war and forbidden love in dances of swirling haste and savagery.

The story of three kingdoms locked in revolt, strife, plot after vicious plot unveiling a constant pileup of dead bodies and broken oaths, pathetic innocents and enemy from a series of breathtaking stylized battles that Dante has devised.

Their staging is altogether fresh, bold, original. "Orosman" offers a go-for-broke melange of improvisation, collision, sounds and visuals improbably held together by a belief in the power of the stylized gesture—a flying of the hand, a thrust of the hip, a contortional leap into the air—to define characters and create chaos, illustrate the grandiose chaos of warfare, push the story forward to its inevitable, tragic close.

Production designer Tanya Malaquias helps the silkiness run along with an ingenious assortment of double-duty props—the kalasag as both dagger and musical instrument, a tambalan used as a spear, bamboo dais flogged with frightening ferocity to create the noise and fog of war. The evocative lighting is by John Bacolor.

Flowing through all this is the glimpsed sound of Carol Bella's non-ethnic score (played by a live band), which lends texture and immediacy to the soaring pageant onstage.

The songs themselves—urgent, soulful melodies that give no consonants to pop sensibilities—have an inspired tapestry of indigenous sounds (but, ruing by the play's superior vocal talents (such as the two alternating female leads, Cris Villonco and Shaila Ponce), erase over from chant to love tune to lament with eloquent ease.

A highlight is the Act 2 opener, which blends the voices of the cast in chanted verses into one gorgeous anthem of yearning.

Star-making turns

What a pleasure to see Villonco and Ponce play Zafira. The first exhibits elaborate fussiness; the second's plucky vulnerability. When they sing, they change every note with soaring authority. Those two leads have to actress deliver star-making performances that will remind one of style, the indomitable captive princess in the devil's opera.

As the scrappy Galeam, Aces Aquilla Javier holds her own against Villonco and Ponce-Galeam and Zafira, in fact, much to one's surprise, considering the roles of Balagtas' prose poem, have a self-contained dynamic found that this play underlines: calls much care and apparent approval. He seems an intelligent, aggressive, cunning lot, as vengeful as they are beautiful.

One can't say the same, alas, of the men. Except for feminine curse by bloody Cassalang as the vampire king Bendaram and JC Santos as Zafira, the two alternating Orosmans (Oswald Peters and Billy Hayes) do right by their roles and sing sweetly, but are humanizing by weak, underwritten characters. Orosman doesn't register strongly until late in Act 2, and by then the play's tenacious attention seems to have turned off and made demons of the viewer).

Similarly, Orosman's younger brother Abdallah is played by veteran actor Lee Marcos with a noticeable dark, frustrating one-effective tension between the battling siblings.

Zafira's the summer, meanwhile, a sexy and exquisite ethnic-inflected vessel that by Tao Nesto does clearly the daughter of her studies, Evan Pinto), and less so by Natasha Cabrera (who was excellent in Dulaang UP's earlier musical "The Most Soprano," but seems a tad too emotionless here).

Lumpy Act 1

Not bested as it is, "Orosman at Zafira" is not without stumbles. After a rousing start that sees the three kingdoms introduced and scene matched via deftly executed movement transitions, Act 1 settles into a rather lumpy run.

But Act 2 supplies the balance with a breathtaking, exhilarating series of set pieces. One battles the scintillating toward a final Feuerish orgy of bloodletting and violence.

The closing scene finishes with a haunting sense of despair, ambivalence and regret—the last spadeful of earth that "Orosman at Zafira" witnesses over the dying, happy-ever-after resolutions of the old comedya.

No dancing pictured! In this issue, reassure shots is the first great production of the year.

"Orosman at Zafira" runs until March 2 at Wilfredo Ilio Guerrero Theater, Palma Hall, UP Diliman, QC. Call 9204349, 9237401, 9818500 local 2449, (0917) 6288228. Visit www.orosmanatzafira.multiply.com

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph, text www.gildacadiz.com

LIFESTYLE

Phone snapshots from an Intramuros tour

OVERHEAD shot of Casa Manila courtyard using a Sony Ericsson W958

Text and photos
by Dexter R. Mailig
Contributor

IF ONLY WALLS COULD talk, what a story they would tell. If those walls were Intramuros', then the stories would be endless.

There were the cheapies that could have been running through the heads of journalists from leading national dailies as Sony Ericsson organized a mini walking tour of the walled city recently.

Equipped with the W880, the first 3-megapixel Cyber-shot phone from SE, the journalists were in a clicking frenzy during the tour.

With our trainer Carlos Celdran taking the lead, the journalists' first inventory was Fort Santiago. It is a place of historic importance—a symbol of the vast Spanish colonial empire. It is also significant because it was where the (legitimized Jose Rizal wrote "Mi Ultimo Adios" while awaiting execution. It was built by Miguel Lopez de Legazpi in 1571.

Next was the oldest church in the country, San Agustin. The only structure left standing after the destruction of Intramuros during the Battle of Manila, the San Agustin church has a vaulted ceiling and dome painted by two Italian artists. Silvestre and Tedeschi. It is here where the tomb of Lopez de Legazpi can be found.

The final stop was Casa de Manila, if ever anybody needed to see how the Philippine colonial elite used to live, then this museum would be as close as any could get. Steamed

PAGE E2

Look fabulous for that dinner date.
Check out the BEAUTY SALONS section of the
DPC YELLOW PAGES
PRINT • INTERNET • MOBILE

WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS

Check out the look (the of this year's revamped room
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Leisure will take on a new meaning... soon. LANDCO PACIFIC

OLD WOOD benches and pews (left) at San Agustin church. Rusty details—ceiling of the Augustinian church. Details of ceiling (right) at Casa Manila

Phone snapshots from an

along Ens. Luna St., Casa de Manila has furniture and artworks from the 17th to early 20th century.

But, of course, a visit to Intramuros would not be complete without a luxury hotel in Bonifacio, a tourist attraction in itself. A 19th-century-style establishment, Dusit Thani (the name refers to a wealthy class that benefited from Manila's entrance into the world trade) opened its doors in 1969 and has had its share of memories from various social gatherings and the personalities that have dined within its walls.

Finding out all these in an hour begs the question of what else can be discovered from now until March 23. Just as the participants were able to rediscover Intramuros, the Top Shot contest organizers hope to bring Filipinos has organized again the Top Shot contest.

With its theme, "I love sharing my discoveries," the competition picks up where it left off last year, enabling users to show off their skills in interpreting their meager and extraordinary discoveries in and around the Philippines. Entries may be uploaded at www.sanyu-asean.com/topshot.

"Last year, the Top Shot competition drew more than 1,500 entries from all over the country," Sony Eriksson marketing manager Patrick Lutteja said. "The Filipino's penchant

MAGNIFICENT baroque door of San Agustin church

for taking pictures was clearly shown through the Top Shot competition, so it was just natural for us to launch a new photo contest. This time around, we wanted to see it in all our country and the things that define it and make it so special."

Four of the entries from last year's Top Shot contest were selected as contest winners for the 2007 World View Competition. One of them became a finalist.

"We want to encourage photography enthusiasts to come up with images of their 'discoveries' of the Philippines. These 'discoveries' present new ways of seeing, fresh insights, or novel perspectives of the many 'faces and 'facets of our country," Lavegas said.

This year's winner of the Top Shot contest will get a Sony Ericsson K850i Cybershot phone, and two Semi-Adventure Passes plus P15,000 pocket money.

Two runners-up will receive two Semi-Adventure Passes each.

The Semi-Adventure Pass entitles the bearer to an unlimited number of domestic flights on any of the airline's regular routes within 45 days.

Meanwhile, those who purchase specially-marked Sony Ericsson Cyber-shot phones have the chance to win a grand prize of Boracay Beach Getaway for 15, a K850i, P15,000 worth of pocket money and accommodations at Discoveries Beach Resort. Two other lucky winners will win a K770i and two Semi-Adventure Passes.

(The pictures on this page were taken with the Sony Ericsson K850i.)

OLD dining table inside Casa Manila

DETAIL of carving from San Agustin door

NOCDCO pulpit of San Agustin Church

UE Fine Arts alumni hold homecoming exhibit

CALLING ALL FINE ARTS ALUMNI OF THE University of the East, to join "Quarter, 1908-2008," a homecoming exhibit to mark the 100th anniversary of UE Fine Arts, March 1-April 11, at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) Complex, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City.

For inquiries, contact Ed Arzillo, UE Fine Arts Alumni Association (UEFAAA) president: 0906-2875205. Or e-mail: tokbet@mail.com; edarzillo2006@yahoo.com.ph.

Also call Aileen Feliso, UEAAA (7236557); or Lito de Guzman, UE College of Fine Arts (5623811 to 20/5073 loc. 3021).

UST interschool painting competition on Feb. 27

THE 2008 UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS Interschool On-the-Spot Painting Competition will be held on Feb. 27 at the Arch of the Centuries of the UST Benavides Park.

Sponsored by the UST Office of Secretary General and UST Museum of Arts and Sciences, the competition is open to all fine arts students of Mapua, Mapua-Intramuros, Ateneo de Manila, Ateneo de Manila-Loyola Heights, Ateneo de Manila-Rizal Campus, Ateneo de Manila-Silliman, Ateneo de Manila-Tagaytay, Ateneo de Manila-Naga, Ateneo de Manila-Cebu, Ateneo de Manila-Davao, Ateneo de Manila-Iligan, Ateneo de Manila-Zamboanga, Ateneo de Manila-Legazpi, Ateneo de Manila-Laguna, Ateneo de Manila-Tacloban, Ateneo de Manila-Cagayan de Oro, Ateneo de Manila-Roxas, Ateneo de Manila-Lipa

CASA Manila patio, stair and corridor evoke the glory that was Intramuros.

Intramuros tour

Homepage B1

Perpetual Help celebrates 40 years of VALUEducation

TO ASSURE OUR COUNTRY OF A better tomorrow, we need to start building its right kind of character today.

That was what Dr. Cel. Antonio Lagrosa Tamayo said his wife Dr. Daisy Mejia Tamayo believed 40 years ago and it was their utmost desire to help the country build a better future through Christian values that led them to establish the University of Perpetual Help (UPH).

With the event "Character Building = Nation Building," continuation for the four school building began and was finished in a record-breaking period of only four months and through the coming years, the University of Perpetual Help would display the same kind of growth to become one of the premier universities south of Metro Manila.

Dr. Tamayo, the President of the University of Perpetual Help, credits the continued success of Perpetual Help to adhering to its simple institutional philosophy "WorldWideEducation. The students of today can only be successful tomorrow tomorrow by developing the right kind of character today, – respectful, hardworking and committed to nation-building."

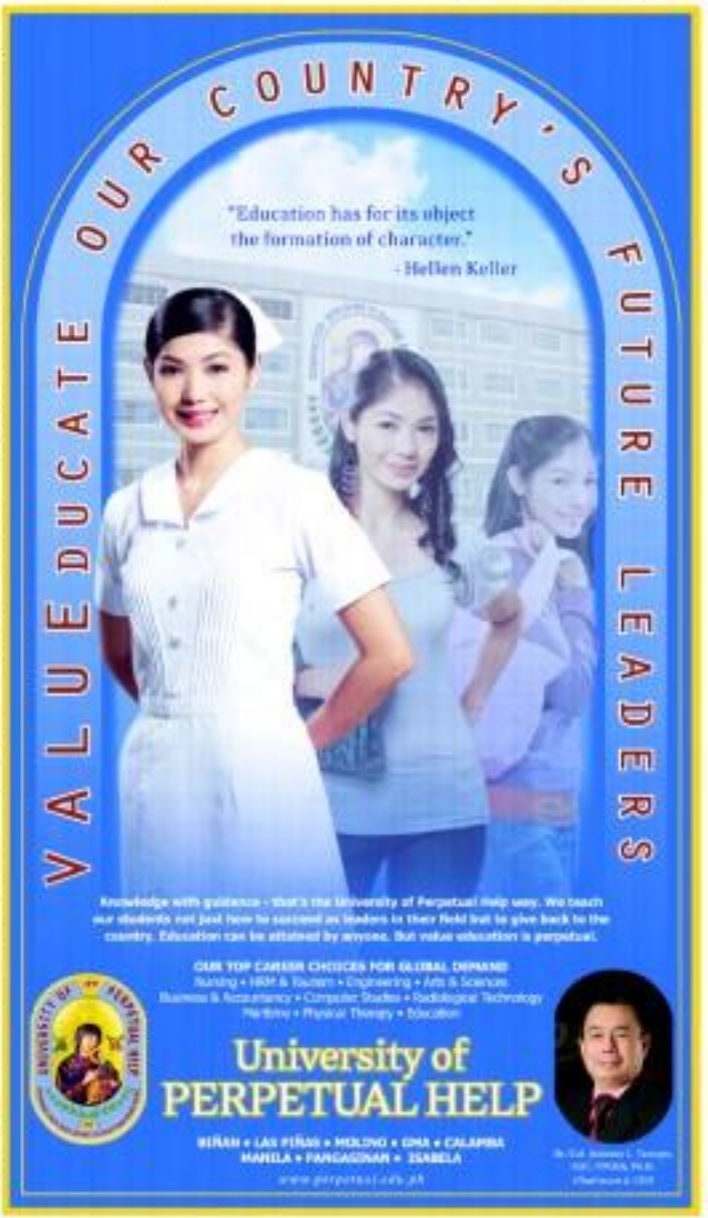
The University of Perpetual Help offers more than 70 courses to its students, preparing them to succeed in careers that are the most in-demand around the world, including Nursing, Hotel and Restaurant Management & Tourism, Computer Studies, Business & Accountancy and Engineering.

But more than equipping students to be globally competitive, the University of Perpetual Help believes its goal is to be preparing future leaders. "Graduating from college is just the beginning – when they step out, they are ready for more challenges and ready to give back to the community."

In line with its anniversary celebration, the University of Perpetual Help Las Piñas campus recently launched University Week, whose highlight was the opening of Perpetual Help's School of Aviation. The first university-based aviation school in the Philippines, it offers a private pilot licensure course, commercial pilot licensure course, aircraft maintenance courses and even a Bachelor's degree in flying.

Leading the ceremony was Dr. Cel. Antonio L. Tamayo, the President, Chairman of the Board and CEO of both UPH System and School of Aviation and Col. Ernesto S. Lenaton (MGEN, President of the UPHSA-Sangley Airport of Aviation and delivering the keynote speech was Lt. Gen. Horacio S. Ermita, Senior Undersecretary, Department of the Navy and AFP. Accepting the donated helicopter pilot.

UNIVERSITY OF PERPETUAL HELP LAUNCHES SCHOOL OF AVIATION. Dr. Antonio L. Tamayo (left), President of the UPHSA-Sangley Airport of Aviation, and Col. Ernesto S. Lenaton, PAFR, President of the UPHSA-Sangley Airport of Aviation, are delivering the keynote speech was Lt. Gen. Horacio S. Ermita, Senior Undersecretary, Department of the Navy and AFP. Accepting the donated helicopter pilot.



Pacquing at West

West Gallery (41, Bldg. 4, Mon-Alabang City; tel. 6347284) presents Bernardo Pacquing's "Write in the Margin of Time," until March 4. The exhibit features five large-scale paintings, each depicting Pacquing's frame of mind and embarkation to make mistakes along the way.

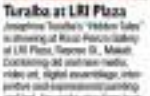
Turalba at LRI Plaza

Josephine Turalba's "Hidden Tales" is showing at Rizal Precio Gallery at LRI Plaza, Reposo St., Makati. Combining oil and resin media, video art, digital assemblage, interactive and representational painting and text, her works give form to inner life categories. The works are representing the artist's entire residency in New York and Berlin. Call 8926048.

Visual Arts

Bateman at One Workshop

Australian artist-choreographer Honey Bateman will hold her first Philippine exhibit, "Through Aus-Visible Eyes," March 1-Apr 6 at One Workshop Gallery, La Fuerza Plaza II, 2287 Don Chino Roces Ave., Makati City. The exhibit documents Bateman's compressions of living in the Philippines. Mix-ab-stract and semi-abstract photo-lographs concentrate on three aspects of Filipino life: "the provincial," religion and shopping. Call 8150594.



Group show at Tin-aw

Tin-aw Art Gallery (Unit C-1-3, UGF, Olympian Towers, Makati Ave. corner Gil. Tomas St., Makati City) presents "Absentality Line," a group exhibit, on Feb. 29. It features the works of Melvin Estrella, Alfred Evangelio, Mark Justiniani, Raymond Legaspi, Joji Mallari, Ferdie Montemayor, Kiko Rosas, Lore Salvador, Juanito Torres, Dumalyn Uy and Pamela Yao. Works vary from oil on canvas, mixed media to sculpture. The exhibit runs until March 21. Call 894-5 5808000. Admission is free.

Lefranc at BlueLine

Blue Line Gallery (A/F, Boston Makati; tel. 81 22/128 or 8822-9366) presents a one-man show by Joseph Lefranc, "Alle-viations of Compulsive Lines," March 1-29, featuring oil-on-canvas works.

Perazo at Art Asia

Bohemian visual artist Sam Perazo presents his recent abstract paintings in "Circle and Stripe," until Feb. 29 at Art Asia Gallery, 401, Bldg. B, 708 Aguinaldo, Mandaluyong City. The paintings fine-tuned in the exhibit evolutionarily evolve on its varied approaches to the formal elements. These exhibit is curated by Benjie Estrella.

Jimenez at Alliance Française

Pete Jimenez's ability to capture characters, personalities, atmospheres and other subjects in inks and washes is apparent in all of the 18 pieces presented in his solo exhibit "Going Collection," until March 14 at Alliance française de Manille's Fotal Gallery. Call 8967441 or 8967686.

On-the-spot painting contest

This year's Lihang Sining, an on-the-spot painting competition at Ayala Museum, is set March 8. It is open to all high-school students 13-18 years old. Entry forms are available at the museum Visitors Office or Ayala Museum. Pre-ins may be submitted first through Feb. (757)2888/8441/8501. Deadline is March 3. Call 7571111 local 23 or 7552888.

A NEW art gallery, Pinoline Pinoy, by E.R. Tagle will be inaugurated Feb. 29 at Hobbies, The Concept Mall, Macapagal Blvd., Pasay City. The gallery will permanently house the works of the gentleman-engineer and painter E.R. Tagle. Richard Lee of Hobbies recently met with Ernest S. Tagle, son of the painter.

"ANTIMISFECTION," by Jonathan Castro

Group show at Blanc

"Uncertainty," group exhibit by Lina Sal Vadis, Eugene Jarque, Mari Kalalamo and Jonathan Castro, will be on view March 3-31 at Blanc, 25 Cinema Towers, 140 H.V. dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City. Salcedo creates his work in environments using everyday materials such as bicycle gears, chain-chewing gum and stainless-steel tubes. Jarque uses metal in the form of aluminum sheets in his art. Valdezcruz uses cosmographic figures that are constellations, astronomical and sometimes lewd, using strips of paper, cotton strings, coffee beans, shoelaces and cotton rags. Castro explores the interweaving of fabrics, color and visual patterns through sublimation of painting techniques and materials. Call 7520002 or 9005. 9919436.

Fabio-Gleiler at Ayala

"Overcome," a series of works by Sandro Fabio-Gleiler, opens Feb. 28 at Ayala Museum's Arts&Space. The artist employs computer-aided visual vocabulary that relays insights on figuration and reality. The exhibit runs until March 13. Call 7571111 local 23 or 7552888.

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LIFESTYLE

New colors, new worlds from Onglepho

JAMES Onglepho

ASIA ART GALLERY, ESTABlished in 1994 at Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Edsa, Mandaluyong, has a new home in Unit 2315, Entertainment Mall, SM Mall of Asia, Pasay City.

The gallery has long been exclusively showcasing James Onglepho's paintings. It is where Onglepho has regularly demonstrated the poetic and musical qualities of his works, which are very much admired by collectors.

Since 2000, Onglepho's style has evolved into another artistic period. Meanwhile, cataract had formed in his eyes, first in the right, then in the left eye. His eyesight was greatly affected, positively in the way he saw color schemes.

He decided, in October 2006, to undergo cataract surgery. Supervised by his son-in-law, Dr. Amiel Wee of the Eye Retina Center along EM. Kalaw in Manila, the operation lasted more than an hour.

When Onglepho came outside and saw Luneta Park, he was surprised: "Wow, ang ganda pala nitong mundo."

"I started at home for about one month, and spent time to read my collection of art books, as well as my own written works on the theories and techniques of painting," he said. "I realized that 2000-2006 was my transitional period. I began trying to find a breakthrough, to find another vision in my painting."

He did research later "to challenge myself to come up with a new style."

Onglepho spent most of 2007 working on finding new horizons in painting. The result is a vast change, especially in the way Onglepho has expanded his color schemes. His works from the years 2000-2006 were mostly monochromatic, revolving around red, yellow and orange hues. Now the new works are more colorful and provide more contrast. Onglepho, in fact, has added cool colors, such as violet, blue and green.

This move has largely enhanced the visual elements of his paintings. This was already seen in some works in his last one-man exhibit held Jan. 26, 2007, at Asia Art Gallery's new location, the SM Mall of Asia.

Onglepho sees 2008 as a new start, with traces of the qualities of his old works no longer evident. He is glad to see that the effect in his paintings expresses new realms.

Onglepho has always seen himself as a beginners. Each day presents a new experience and a new world that inspire him to paint something new.

"I studied painting more than 50 years ago at the University of Santo Tomas, and I am still learning," he said. "Every time I pick up a brush, I'm trying to do the best painting I have ever done. Practice makes perfect. Art creation is a kind of spiritual activity. I paint and I enjoy it."

The 27th one-man exhibit of James Onglepho runs 9th to 26 March 26 at Asia Art Gallery. Guests of honor at the opening include Charles K. Chuaunsu Jr. and Jerry Chan. The exhibit consists of paintings in oil featuring flowers and landscapes.

For inquiries, call Asia Art Gallery at (632) 9810063.

"UNDER the Seashore"

"FLOW Free"

Romeo Forbes remembered

"DUYAN ng Pangarap"

THE LION GALLERY AT SHOP in Serendra, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, presents "Full Moon," a collection of works by the late Romeo Forbes, in commemoration of his second death anniversary.

Featured in this exhibit are sculptures and studies he made for the children's book "Ellen and His Town."

Also on show are originally signed prints of his popular watercolor pieces the artist had kept since 2002.

As Ang Kiukok and Malang did, Forbes began painting in a very young age.

At 10, he started joining art competitions.

In 1993, he had his first taste of winning a major prize in a local art competition in Bulacan. He received numerous distinctions and awards, winning the Lutgardo Y. Figuras Art Competition of the Instituto Gervasino in 1998; the Asia Europe Young Artists' Award; and Ateneo Grounds.

In 2001, he swept the grand prizes in the Art Fellini contest, Shell National Students Art Competition, and Asian Development Bank's Key Industries Cover Design Competition.

In June 2005, the prodigious artist made an even greater mark on the art scene when his paintings served as visuals for the critically acted children's book "Ellen and His Town," published by Cantoso and the UST Publishing House. The full-size works he created for the book were gathered for his first solo exhibit. They were immediately sold out.

In 2005, Forbes painted over one of the Gupits sculptures as part of the celebration of the Philippine Daily Inquirer's 20th anniversary.

"FULL Moon Triptych"

"BIRTH"

"CHAOS II"

His artworks, "Mystical Lure," also features the colors are of Katrina Tuvera's "The Jupiter Effect," an award-winning novel on interior-line babies.

In February 2006, Forbes died of cancer. He was just 24.

Known as an "engaging raconteur," he held viewers captive with his exuberantly colored debris and whatnots with their necks crossed in almost-contortionist fashion, their eyes and fingers lurk-like. He had a penchant for concrete nouns, which usually occupied the corners of his canvas.

"Full Moon" is a celebration not just of his birthday of debuts and the Earth's lone satellite. It is aimed as a lessons of his appreciate-to-those who are as talented and promising as Romeo Forbes was.

"Full Moon" runs until Feb. 29. Call 8815332.

They evoke the chill of nostalgia, of distant thoughts, the homesick heart

"TRIBUTE of Cix"

Master of the monochrome

By Constantine C. Tejero

ONE OF THE MOST CHALLENGing feats for a painter is to effectively handle the monochrome. Because here the complexity of thought or power of emotion is expressed in one tone: what color and no infinite hues can more readily capture.

On the other hand, some thoughts and emotions are more passionately expressed or delicately explored through the monochrome and in various nuances and shadings. Among our very few artists who have long found this out are Lee Lumbera, Jerome Aure Aquilizan, Bonifacio Ilustrisimo.

Aquilizan, in fact, has been wielding a single color tone since as far as we can remember, from his paintings to his collages to his objects and installations. Most of it is earth tone, neutral, muted or achromatic, such as brown or gray, from slate-gray, slate-blue, black and white, most probably inspired by the residence of Mr. Makiling where he stayed as one time in touch at his arts school.

Aquilizan has found again a proper subject for the monochrome in his latest exhibit "Watersocks," pieces in polymer paint on canvas, recently in Galleria Duemila, 2258 Leong St., Bangkal.

This is a collection of dissection consisting of several series of four paintings with each composite forming a circular image. The quadrants can be rearranged for textural variation.

Aquilizan has recently migrated to Australia with his family, and he reveals his latest work is only "reflecting the downtimes of the Queensland beaches, specifically the Sunshine Coast," where he and his children spend time together. The composites are supposed to portray the seascape.

These are finely wrought pieces in black, white and silver, textured just so, with curves alternating with glib, smooth brushstrokes with paint dripping. Though abstract, they look quite right for their titles such as "Reef," "Fringe of Gay," "Shelling Sand," "Intertidal Zone."

Contemplating the pieces, one could almost feel the roughness of the crag, the chill of the ocean wind. Or see the glimmer of the grains of sand, the luminosity of the bands of an opaque Or even taste the tang of the salt spray, and sense the currents of air and water.

While in previous exhibits Aquilizan used the monochromes to explore his thoughts and feelings for the landscape of Makiling where he used to teach, and monochromatic derivist from his life-long memories of the mountain and its sea, now he is using it to depict the seascape of his new home.

These paintings may be evolutionary but to us they also evoke the chill of nostalgia, of distant thoughts, of the homesick heart. It is precisely the monochromatic's power of suggestion that stirs up such strong emotions in us, or, that all the colors of the rainbow can hardly conjure—and this the artist understands.

Aquilizan is one of the most accomplished artists of his generation. It's just too bad that we've lost him to the Down Under. But we have this feeling that, like a true Mac-Pinoy, time and again he will return.

"SHIFTING Sand"

"INTERTIDAL Zone"

'Tutok' art shows and talks open this week

ARTISTS AND ART LOVERS WILL talk about art current in "Tutok Creative Convergence," Feb. 26-29. The events is part of National Arts Month 2008.

There will be music, poetry, live art, improvised installations, graffiti, and video at Sambalikhaan, Feb. 27-29.

Sambalikhaan is part of Ateneo Institute for Liturgy and Music, 2771-L Rodriguez Ave., Quezon City, near Ateneo College and St. Luke's Hospital.

On Feb. 28, "Brod Kampado" opens at the Ateneo Art Gallery.

Says Jose Victor Ruiz, curator: "The exhibit embraces a travel to manner for tattoo and identity, using visual arts best toward the popular as the engine of change, self-empowerment and self-acceptance. It joins an artistic project with roots as deep as Nonoy Pagsiu, Bencuan Domingo and Jose Luna, and includes those whose works in the '70s led to Kalinaw's Social Realism.

Held in this artists from the nationalistic Sining Gallery Bellagmen, Sanggunian, Ugat Lahi, Artist Shelf-replay Collection, Iloy World Direct, Antipo Arting and over the Manulaye tribe of Davao Oriental. It also showcases a fresh batch of 23-0-

"JACK on Pay," by Alfred Espallo Jr.

century players addressing the serious landscape of a millennium yet to unfold.

"Tutok Kampado" is an updated dialogue between a postmodern community and the high-modern collection of the Ateneo Art Gallery. Kampado' examines nationhood, social-artists, critical self-acceptance, polished complexity, and proposes that art practice comes with an empowering change, a concept, an implication that cannot be distilled away into abstraction from but has to be distilled and manifested by and in such form as fully address the work's issues from.

"HOMAGE of My Paternal Genes," by Don Marvin Sandoyte

"DRUG on Machine," by Jay Pacana

"The antidotes of 'CZ400'—forming-entering globalization, climate change, hegemony and extremism—have prodded artists to either distance contemporaneity or provide postmodern concerns of indifference. Says Kampado' chronic disasters."

To be exhibited are works by Arturo Luz, Vicente Manansala, J. Elizalde Navarro, Salvador Chabet, Antonio Austria, Brenda Fajardo and Lamar Santana.

Younger artists are also represented: Edgar Talusan Bonoyan, Emmanuel Garibay, Mervin Jamillo, Noel Bolor Galeon, Kawit D. Flores, Jose Tence Ruiz, Boy Dominguez, Alden Cruz, Mark Salvatus, Rem Calabayan, Jay Pocong, Leo Dan, Jim Librinas, Ben Salubayba and Kirby Sevilla.

"Brod Kampado" will run until May 22.

The Ateneo Art Gallery is at the basement of the Rizal Library, Ateneo campus, Katipunan Avenue, Quezon City. It is open Monday-Friday. Call 4266488.

Taiwan filmfest, photo exhibit

THE TAIWAN FILM FESTIVAL AND "Enchanting Taiwan" photo exhibition opened recently at the UST Thomas Aquinas Research Center.

Jointly sponsored by the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (Teco) and UST, the festival-exhibit aimed to enhance the cultural exchanges between Taiwan and the Philippines and spread awareness of Taiwan's culture.

Teco internationally awarded feature films and three documentaries were shown. Some 50 photographs of Taiwan's natural beauty and cultural splendor best represented Taiwan to the viewers in Thomasian.

The opening of the festival also coincided with the first day of celebration of the 397th anniversary of the University of Santo Tomas.

Officiating the ribbon-cutting were Ateneo Representative Salvador Escudero III, UST Vice Rector Fr. Clemente Mangune, Philippine representative to Taipei Antonio Basilio, Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, National Artist Alejandro Roces, UST Vice Rector Fr. Clarence Marquez, OP, UST Secretary General Fr. Isidro Abaño, OP, and MPH board member Robert Rivera.

TAIWAN Representative Hsin Hsing Wu (fourth from left), UST Rector Fr. Rolando Dela Rosa, OP, Ateneo Representative to Taipei Antonio Basilio, Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, National Artist Alejandro Roces, UST Vice Rector Fr. Clarence Marquez, OP, UST Secretary General Fr. Isidro Abaño, OP, and MPH board member Robert Rivera

rize Robert Rivera.

Ambassador Wu said he was happy and honored to hold the festival to celebrate the anniversary of UST.

He mentioned that links with the university had been established by two of his predecessors, Ambassadors Benjamin A.V. Leo and Lin Tsejen, both UST alumni.

Wu said Taiwan and the Philippines were close neighbors. He cited statistics in trade, tourist visitors, investments, overseas workers in Taiwan, and intermarriages between Filipinos and Taiwanese to show the good relations between the two countries, which the representative said he hoped to strengthen.

He said Taiwan hoped to hold more cultural projects with academic and cultural institutions.

The award-winning films screened were "Chocolate Ray," "The Blue Fairy," "Waking Look," "The Rhythm is With Village," "Symphony," "Taipei's Subconscious,"

"WANDERINGS," by Renann Ong

"THE HUNTER and the Hunted," by Triaman Manaculla

Fifty for a first

By Jessica Zafrardent-Rebollido
Contributor

A YEAR AGO, KULEA Gallery opened with an initial offering of 47 art works by the same number of artists. This year, the gallery decided on the nice round number of 50 to mark its first anniversary. Thus the exhibit, "1/50."

The title seems to derive from the serial numbering of prints. But we know that no two artworks by the same artist are alike. The title really seems to say that one space has been divided by 50 individual works.

The goal, says Aida de la Peña, the pleasant Cebuano who owns Kulea (and perhaps from whose name the gallery's name was derived), is to gradually increase the pieces to 100 by the time the gallery marks its 10th birthday.

It is a fine lie in Iloilo says don't hold us noting coins in fruition. Anyway, the gallery seeks to feature new names with great promise to art.

Already the gallery has lined up several exhibits in the next months by Pino Avis, shared and/or one-man of UP, SU and PWU.

Located on top of a mountain shop and flanked by a pharmaceutical office and an herbal-products shop in Bacolod, the 450-square Kulea is stone and mesmerizing, welcoming both artists and collectors to a rather laid-back viewing of the exhibited works.

The front has two lucky dragons as sentinels, herringbones on the floor and lower than the concrete that supports the glass wall.

The show is curated by Fred Cayol. Immediately upon an one of the two panels by the glass is a detailed painting of a bicapsized dragon head by SJ Colmenares.

A young artist, Colmenares has a deft hand that delivers quick, light-as-air strokes. Notable is how he precisely captures the shoes of the figurine head and how light is prominent on parts of its curved surfaces.

"Salud" by Randy Salon shows a dog carrying food on what appears to be a sofa. The resonance of the sunlight shows the artist to be a light-and-shade maverick.

Departure

Rodic Montemayor's "Pantaloong" is a unique from minor to gray and black. It's a departure from his signature, lensed of the mind-thickened dwellings in his charged cityscapes. So sure has a compressed lineup of people, a sort of battle-of-the-enemy.

Rhoel Bacle favors squat faces in depicting an ukay-ukay building in Zumbo. The color choice provides an apt vintage effect for the architecture.

Jovan Wandi uses a real picture, or negro with ego. On Oil he paints and restoration, resulting in ornate lines, as if the persons were crumpled or folded.

Another mixed-media work is that by Renato Dog, where a tone figure grabbed in crimson is in a skeletal frame of metal sticks coiled and riveted onto the canvas. The piece conveys the potentials of isolation/solitude/claustrophobia all at once.

Triaman Manaculla, too, is grimly none-Iloilo. The metal dog-nose mutant and the fish-headed body of a woman has a self-explanatory title: "The Hunter and the Hunted."

There are only three female scenes on exhibit in a roster of 50. Way telling. Was this steps true to her skilled style and stands are with "Tell Me Something about the Picture."

Only two highly differing sculptures are on display. Mike Cacilo's brass on stone, which includes a conical figure and a piece of glass supported by scaffolding, but closer to a structured or architectural feel.

Its opposite is Joe Geraldo's cross-cocoa molding of contorted architectonized bodies, either clinging together for life or all melting away.

Though choosing what works to appreciate or buy may be difficult, it is eased somehow by the uniform 18" x 18" size. Installers still just have to acclimate with Kulea and not the whole lot for themselves.

Call 33-44777 for details.

Comments welcome at regladay@gmail.com

"SMILEY," by BJ Cabangon

"TELL ME Something about the Picture," by Pam Yet

Raul Isidro evokes his own 'Landscapes'

RAUL G. ISIDRO

"BLUE Overcast"

By Lito B. Zulueta

RAUL G. ISIDRO'S ART IS SO prodigious, the art lover or collector is hard-pressed to keep up with him. Although lately indulging in print (he was president of the Philippine Association of Printmakers from 2001 to 2006), he has steadily produced paintings and sculptures across the years that never fail to show the verve, vitality and vision that won for him The Outstanding Young Man of the Philippines (TOYM) award for fine arts in 1979.

But while his art remains young, it is not immature. Like his generation of abstractionists who came after Jose Joya, he has been compared to the National Artist even if he did not study under him, in fact, when he won the TOYM, he said Leo Rosario: "I don't know why working in abstraction is always identified with Joya's style. The truth is that Joya is from UP and I'm from UST... So I'll just continue working and let people find out what the differences are."

The difference is that, aside from having studied under masters with a far longer lineage in modernism (his teacher was National Artist Victorio Edades and his batchmates were Jaime de Guzman and Prudencio Lamarroza), Isidro's abstraction is characterized by a lyrical beauty and unassuming polish that perhaps may look to his artistic sophistication and romantic sensibility.

Isidro is an artist that has continued to evolve not to ambitiousness of experimentation and theatrics but in the depth of his artistic explorations. His afterward shapes have gone from ovals and circulars to linears and dashes, while the colors have gone from earth colors and blues to even darker hues.

All of these revisions and tutorings aren't really radical in attempt. They're held together by Isidro's ever deepening romantic sensibility. Like Lamarroza, he has largely pastoral themes and images from nature and its wonders. That's why his newest solo exhibit of acrylics—his 40th—has a very unassuming title, "Landscapes." His artistic explanations remain assured in the here and now.

If there's any change in the new series, it's the celebratory colors and the even more confident brushwork. "Blue Overcast" is a brilliant evocation of sky and thunder, with the vintage Isidro linears like streaks of dark light that seem more hopeful than foreboding. And "Red Pond" is dreamily lovely: You could literally see the fish dart in the pond.

Here are nature poems that throb with lively mixed life. It has been said more than once that Isidro's landscapes are really internal rather than external. The may be true, but the far more important truth is that Isidro's art has the capacity to remake nature. The artist is his own best landscape reader.

"HEROIC/Pulse"

"YELLOW Formation" and, above, "Red Pond" II

Raul G. Isidro's "Landscape" opens Feb. 28, 6:30 p.m., at Ovidlle Gallery, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City. It will run until March 15. Call 6355061.

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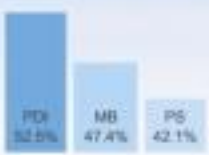

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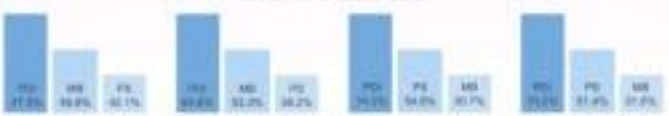

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INSIDE
Hollywood hopes for no-rain 80th Oscars /G4

Psychology of *scandal*

Why do some celebrities revel in controversy? The psychotherapist of several show biz denizens has some very revealing explanations

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

DR. RANDY DELA ROSA, life coach and psychotherapist, stirred up on a disturbing show biz phenomenon: controversial celebrities who seem addicted to fame ... or, to be more accurate, infamy.

The public knows who they are—starlets famous for high jinks than for their trade skills.

Necessary seems to be the most dependable entry in show biz today. Time was when scandal magnets would've been run out of town; now they land it over the TV media.

Dr. Dela, who counts celebrities as clients, knows the landscape very well. He is also the resident counselor in MO-CBN's "Pinoy Big Brother"—where he is tasked to supply both celebs and non-celebs with the necessary tools to cope with fame, and the day's rumbles.

What could be the explanation for celebrities whose goal, it seems, is to always figure in controversies?

Some are simply desperate for attention. These include stars whose careers are waning, or stars who will do anything to be popular. They willfully get embroiled in scandals just to get noticed. For them, bad publicity is better than none at all.

Some get spooked by unknown extraterrestrials. Sometimes, they are simply victims of poor judgment, indiscretion or lack of social skills. They forget that, as celebrities, they have a social obligation to behave decently and responsibly. They need to keep in mind that they are constantly under public scrutiny and the unsubtle eye of media.

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

Is there such a thing as addiction to fame? What could cause this?

Being a "star" is all about having status and power. Being a "star" is so close to one can get to being treated like a "god."

Imagine having a multitude of fans who worship you? Such adulation feeds the star's ego. This could be an exhilarating, addictive experience.

Still some others know they can never attain "died" or "matinee idol" status. Thus, they go the opposite route by being a celebutante/bomb, who earns a "bad boy/bad girl" image and gets embroiled in all sorts of scandals. These sure-smile-are-the-least-you-get "fame to fame"—it is still "fame," nevertheless. They are still the talk of the town.

PSYCHOLOGIST 101

DR. RANDY Dela Rosa, left: "They forget that they have a social obligation to...behave decently and responsibly."

Reader: This star needs a psychiatrist

From reader Flo Santi (santiflo_inc@yahoo.com):

Whipping up a major intrigue prior to the announcement of an upcoming project—concert, CD, movie—has worked for several show biz celebrities, including Gretchen Barretto, Aljur Abrenica and Pinky Mae Quiroz.

Shame on their managers for always thinking up gullible, and shame on those who are stupid enough to be fooled by their "magician."

I have pre-bread of histrionic personality disorder? The signs are: attention-seeking behavior, being very dramatic, theatrical, etc. People who have this disorder are uncomfortable unless they are the center of attention. They are provocative, seductive and flirtatious, and are very extravagant (maybe always in front of an audience. Their emotions and expressions are exaggerated, yet they still appear to lack sincerity. Excessive attention-seeking behavior is one of the symptoms. She needs a psychiatrist.

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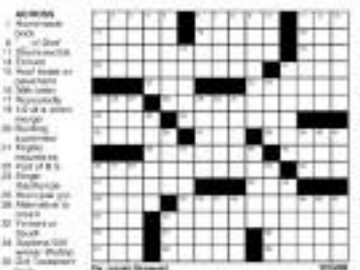

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9	1	6	5	7	8	2	4	3
3	8	2	9	4	6	5	1	7
2	6	9	7	5	1	3	8	4
8	3	7	2	4	6	1	9	5
1	5	4	6	8	3	7	1	2

Marion Cotillard bags a Cesar for Piaf role

PARIS—OSCAR-NOMINATED ACTRESS Marion Cotillard took France's top cinema award on Friday, winning a Cesar for her romantic portrayal of chanteuse Edith Piaf in "La Vie en Rose".

Cotillard, who had already won both a BAFTA and a Golden Globe for the her role as Piaf, had been tipped to win France's answer to an Academy Award.

Her portrayal of Piaf has attracted rave reviews in her home country and abroad and she thanked director Olivier Dahan.

"You changed my life, you changed my life as an actress, you changed my life full stop," she said, fighting back tears.

Cotillard also thanked Piaf's friend Gloria Richer, to whom she became close while preparing for her role. "I love you Gloria, you opened up your life, you opened up 15 years of your life and friendship with Piaf and you really nourished me."

If she wins today, Cotillard would be the first French performer to receive a Best Actress Oscar since Simone Signoret in 1960, although seven others, including Catherine Deneuve and Isabelle Adjani, have been nominated.

Reuters

Is that a cover-up for some lack of inner security?

The basic taxonomy of celebrities is for their shining star to fade. Many of them are founded by the knowledge that their good looks are not going to last, that someone younger and/or more talented is sure to come along. They dread the day when they will be handed as "has-beens." They will do anything to stay in the limelight.

If someone seeks your help regarding this problem (addiction to fame), what will be your advice?

As life coach and psychotherapist for many celebrities, my approach is to help them separate their public and private lives. I counsel them that show biz fame is composite, that it is a losing battle to hold on to it. Rather than worry continuing on stardom, I ask them to focus on developing their craft and growing into mature and seasoned artists.

More importantly, I help them discover who they are as private individuals. I help them find purpose and meaning in life beyond the glitz and glamour of the business. All celebrities, whether they like it or not, are role models. Unfortunately many cannot carry out this task because they are beset by inner conflicts and unresolved issues.

One way to reconcile is to show his values to the all serious target one on one life coaching, values education, psychotherapy and spiritual formation.

How close this obsession with scandal affect the general public, especially vulnerable members like children?

Television is a powerful teacher of values. Sadly, the values it tends to are based on a show biz culture characterized by sensuality, manipulation and, sadly at times, lack of morality.

Children are very impressionable; like sponges, they soak up these warped values.

As the saying goes, "garbage in, garbage out." If the values taught on TV are garbage, then children are the end-users.

There are many current scandalous show biz situations concerning juvenile romance and unplanned pregnancy. What are the effects of these scandals on teenage fans?

When unplanned pregnancies happen to teen stars, viewers' lives naturally suffer.

Most people will sympathize with the pregnant teen, but severely look down on her because of her lack of judgment.

On the other hand, while the male teen partner may be universally castigated, he is also secretly admired for his sexual swagger.

In any case, the short timespan of unplanned pregnancies may send wrong ideals to them: it is unexplainable and sad for the youth to be sexually fruitless, to give in to their urges, and to be a single parent.

What's the message sent to the public by reason of extra-marital affairs in the biz?

Celebrities who engage in scandalous extra-marital affairs have such indiscretions into an "in" thing, as fashionable as wearing the latest designer clothes.

What the public picks up from these celebrities are the following lessons: 1) that lust is a contemporary value than faithfulness and commitment, and 2) that it is all right to betray your partner and children, for as long as your lustful urges are satisfied.

How much, or how little good does it do the public to be incessantly exposed to their empowered idols' indiscretions?

Being exposed to the indiscretions of celebrities can be both healthy and unhealthy for the public.

It is healthy if it serves as a reminder for people to be careful about what they say or do in public. It warns people that the law of karma is always at work, that negative actions beget negative results.

It is unhealthy if, by being exposed to such indiscretions, the public imitates the stars' behavior.

How can parents protect children from negative images/values in media?

Parents need to monitor their own values to make sure that they are not getting sucked into the warped value system of show biz.

Parents also need to strengthen their own marriage, so that their children will know for sure what a loving, respectful and committed relationship is.

If marital or family problems exist, it is important that they receive counseling to resolve the issues. Lastly, instilling spiritual values in children will protect them from negativity and negative influence.

Kodak Maintains Proud History at Academy Awards®; All Nominees for 'Best Picture' Shot on Kodak Film

80th Consecutive year 'Best Picture' was produced on Kodak Film

ROCHESTER, N.Y., Jan. 24 – For the 80th consecutive year – and since the inception of the Academy Awards – the Oscar® for Best Picture will go to a movie produced on KODAK film.

The feature films nominated in 2008 for an Academy Award for Best Picture are **Atonement**, Juno, **Michael Clayton**, **No Country for Old Men**, and **There Will Be Blood**.

The five cinematographers nominated for Oscars this year also chose to use KODAK color negative films to help bring their stories to the screen. Contenders in this year's Cinematography category are: Roger Deakins, ASC, BSC (**The Assassination of Jesse James By the Coward Robert Ford**) and **No Country for Old Men**; Robert Elswit, ASC (**There Will Be Blood**); Janusz Kaminski (**The Diving Bell and the Butterfly**) and Seamus McGarvey, BSC (**Atonement**).

"We congratulate all of this year's nominees for their extraordinary achievements," said Mary Jane Hellyer, President of Kodak's Film, Photofinishing and Entertainment Group and Executive Vice President, Eastman Kodak Company. "We have great pride in their loyalty to the KODAK films that help bring their visions to the screen more faithfully, more efficiently and at the highest levels of performance."

Hellyer also noted that Kodak continues to provide cinematographers with a broad palette of films, and is committed to ongoing investment and innovation across its full motion picture portfolio.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences will recognize Kodak's commitment to innovation this year with an Oscar plaque for the development of photographic emulsion technologies incorporated into the motion picture KODAK family of color negative films. This is the ninth Oscar that Kodak has earned for scientific and technical excellence and service to the motion picture industry.

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"It is a real testament to the experience and skills of our engineers, and to ongoing feedback from our customers, that every year the majority of movies nominated for Academy Awards – in almost every category – originate on KODAK film."

Kodak's initial connection to the motion picture industry was made in 1889, during the dawn of the industry, when Thomas Edison asked Kodak Founder George Eastman if he could provide film for his experimental motion picture camera and projector. Kodak continues to work with customers worldwide to help them bring their stories to life.

The 80th Annual Academy Awards will be held on February 24 at Kodak Theatre, which is now home to the annual Academy Awards ceremonies.

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Information regarding forward-looking statements is available at www.kodak.com/go/forwardlooking.

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KEITH Channareh rehearses the song "That's How You Know" from the film "Enchanted," during rehearsals at the Kodak Theatre on Friday.

Lights, cameras and action

Hollywood prepares for 80th Oscar night

OSCAR statuettes on display at the "Meet The Oscars" exhibit.

LOS ANGELES—BONOLA AND SPARrow, Stars and stand-ins: Rehearsals and news conferences. Its many five-letter terms, known to swag, that every Hollywood tourist could rack up goodies. The city is abuzz with all things Oscar as celebrities flock from all over the world for Sunday's Academy Awards (this morning in Manila).

Nothing like this

They don't have shopping quite like this in Kazakhstan. Borgal Bodrov, the Russian director of "Mongol," "Kazakhstan's entry in the Best Foreign Language Film category, spent Friday afternoon browsing luxurious swag at the Main Event Red Carpet Lounge and Green Suite at the 1900 Club in Beverly Hills.

Celebrity attendees were invited to fill green gift bags full of such goodies as jewelry from Mejuri Emeli and Meghan Hicks, bottles of Inchantly Glacial H2O, dessert's from Nothing Bundt Cakes and surprises from Curl-in and Co.

There were even some goodies for pampered celebrity pooches and kitties, including accessories and clothes from John Paul Pet, Happy Go Lucky Dogs and RO DOG.

Talking Oscar

The 80th annual Academy Awards show promises lots of surprises and less than four hours running time, producer Gil Cates said Friday so far, director Louis J. Horvitz and film academy President Sid Ganis took questions from the press.

Sitting beneath a clear plastic rain tent that shielded the red carpet and its correspondents from drizzly skies, Cates promised a live Oscar day.

"The multitude (the weather) is going to be OK," he said, ignoring a forecast to the contrary.

Viewers can also expect a thrill, Cates said, when they tune into the Academy Awards, which will reflect Oscar's 80-year history.

Jack Nicholson and Brit Russell have been added to the A-list presenters, he said, and the telecast opens with a 90-sec. ond film, "arguably the most exciting piece of film that has ever opened an Oscar show."

Irish alliance

After weaving through his lines on the Kodak Theatre stage Friday morning, Colin Farrell joined a handful of dazed and and other Oscar workers to watch a rehearsal of "Falling Slowly," the nominated song from the Irish indie film "Once."

Wearing a torn T-shirt (ripped with a vest and blazer), his shaggy hair tucked under a gray fedora, the Irish actor (ripped his vest as the film's stars, Glen Hansard and Marketa Irglova, played their original ballad.

When the song ended, Farrell bounded onto the stage to hug Hansard. Gil Cates chatted with the two Dubliners, and Farrell joked that he would "do some accent work tonight" as his Irish lilt would be show ready.

Stars in sneakers

They'll don designer tuxedoes and gowns on Sunday, but stars dressed down for wednday rehearsals at the Kodak Theatre.

Denzel Washington wore sneakers, track pants and a hadkerand hallcap as he ran through his Lose Thursday afternoon.

A ponytailed, makeup-free Hilary Swank embodied superstar casual chic in a silky white blouse, skinny black pants and towering high heels. She stepped on stage, stood thereiph her lines and quickly disappeared into the Kodak commotion.

Producer says the telecast opens with a 90-second film, the 'most exciting' piece in the academy's history

Party time

Oscar week is party week.

Paramount Vantage toasted its nominees—Brad Actor Javier Bardem, Diane Lewis, "There Will Be Blood" writer-director Paul Thomas Anderson and "Into the Wild" supporting actor Hal Holbrook, among others—with a private dinner-and-drinks soiree Thursday night at the week-old STK restaurant in West Hollywood.

John C. Reilly, Mary Episcel, Mary Rudolph and celebrated cinematographer Roger Deakins joined the nominated guests, nibbling on tuna tartare, mini steak sandwiches and marinated French fries. Dan Lewis, wearing a tan leather jacket and a newsboy hat, was all smiles as he shook hands with fans.

Paul Thomas Might was not to first to nominees—including "Juno" director Jason Reitman, screenwriter Diablo Cody and star Ellen Page,—with a dinners Friday at the exotic new hotspot. The buffet-style cold lobster and Jeffrey Kanesenberg's annual "Night Before" party, which benefits the Motion Picture & Television Fund and typically draws on a list crowd.

WORKERS carry a large Oscar poster across Hooter today.

THE RED carpet is covered from the rain. Much of the work continues up till Saturday under the see-through canopies.

PHOENIAN tour jon Hanson during rehearsals inside the Kodak Theatre.

ALSO during rehearsals, actor Colin Farrell, a presenter, sits among placards.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Nadia: Sorry

A text message, purportedly from Nadia Montenegro, made the rounds Saturday. It said, in part, "Kung ano man po ang mga nasabi ko nung araw na yun ... pasensya na po." It refers to a quotable catch Cassidara Ramonito Jim Dalliyawand, 666.

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Still on top of his game after 25 years

By Marinel R. Cruz and the Inquirer Entertainment Staff
Photos by Ryan Lee

GARY VALENCIANO remembers growing up in a house that always had music playing, and acknowledges an older brother as the real singer whom he idolized.

What drove him to pursue it as his own career is an interesting story in itself. Gary is 44 now, and has been living, breathing music for the past 25 years. What keeps him going, he says, are the past struggles he's seen through on the road to a well-earned success.

In this interview with the Inquirer Entertainment staff, he gamely answers all questions—including the boat ordeal he encountered on an outing to the ocean, the secret story he lived in an canned father, and how he met and became fast friends with Martin Nievera. Also, how he dealt with a low point in his career and how he keeps his diabetes in check.

Excerpts:

When did you realize you were interested in music?

It's not look back, I'd say music was a part of the family from the start. My room is from Puerto Rico, so that Latin disposition has always been part of ... Our family is huge. Our house was an open house ... And there was always music. My brother was the real singer.

Gary V says 'rival' Martin Nievera is a big part of his own success

He's got a beautiful voice.

His name?

Robbie. He's in Anaheim (California). He never pursued singing the way I did—I joined the Kualitones. He's 10 years my senior. He would sing in parties, play the drums, so I played the bongos beside him.

So, idol mo siya?

TAKE FIVE

Ha, he's an athlete, too. He held the record in swim for a while in Metro Manila.

Did you also get into sports?

Yes, track and field. I got into a little of basketball and swimming. Only in the Kuala times, when I was 16 or 17, did I start coming out on stage.

Your first time onstage, what was it like?

As a solo artist? The first time that I was put in the middle of the show was in a program at the Immaculate Conception Academy. I did three songs. The last one was called "Magkaisa," written by Jose Miguel Arevalo for the Metro-pop Song Festival of that year and arranged by Ryan Cayabyab. After I sang (minutes people applauding), wow! When I got home, I said to myself, "What happened back there? Could this (singing) be something that I want to do?"

At that time, Lo Sullo was planning to have Freshmen (unreadable)—they would get the best of the lot, kasama sila Randy (Santiago), Jose Miguel ... We were to tour the world. I was thinking, "Should I join that?" There was also the Boys Band; it was supposed to be me, Randy and Jose Miguel (co-vocals). When I went home, my oldest sister (Irene) said, "Personally I feel that you should go solo."

I turned down everything else. It was quite emotional because I really wanted to join the group. Dinun, who never even got angry, sat down with me and said, "This is your chance of opportunity. You're not in school anymore. ..." I said, "Okay, I'll go solo."

At an early part of my career, I my girlfriend Angeli got pregnant. That was a big thing. Angeli and I met with all the managers [of oldest singers] and they said, "Okay what do we do? Angeli, what would you do?" She said, "I could go to Australia. My family's there." Everybody had their own ideas. I was only 16 or 18. I just sat in one corner while everyone was talking.

What did you say?

This was two or three days before my press con for my first major concert at the Araneta Coliseum, which was on April 13, 1984. I said, "When I sit down with the press I'll just tell them [about it]." All the managers went, "Ha? Don't you know what this could to your career?" I said, "My child would grow up and he'd know I hid him. Bakit pa? I even said if the concert would be a flop then we'd have an answer ...

When did you first meet Martin Nievera?

We met during one of my performances in Maytinch. Take note, I had been there three hours early. I was standing in one corner, getting ready, then Martin walks in with his sister Gina (Alvarado). Martin and I just looked at each other ...

About two hours before I went there, I was practicing "Somewhere Down the Road." I was singing in front of my classmates. When I arrived, I was told: "Mr. Valenciano, could Mr. Nievera come first because he has a show pa?" "Sure. No problem." At that time Martin's biggest single was "Holiday." He introduced his last song: "Now I'd like to give you one of my favorite songs ... Somewhere down the Road ..." But his was arranged by Homer Flores. Ang sa akin, cassette, limited lang si Ouisaan. So when they played that, wala na, I lost it ... I was singing but nobody was paying attention ...

But when Martin and I really met, as in formally talked to each other, it was the forefront thing and nobody ever really knew this. It was in St. Paul QC. Ako naman ang nauna to sing "Somewhere down the Road." Philippines pang ano, but in the middle of the song, Martin came in and all heads turned. Sibulang backstage as he had to pass through the audience. Again, take note, ako camera,

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2 ONE MISSED CALL
3 MY BEST FRIEND's GIRLFRIEND
4 JUMPER
5 THE MIST
6 THE EYE

Still on top . . .

From page H1

'Let me tell you about the first time Martin and I stood together onstage'

dya spots next. Any problems, sir, Paul didn't have an open eye. So he came up to me, "Gary, right?" I said, "Yeah. Martin, right?" He said, "Yeah, yeah, yeah. Can you help me out here? Can I borrow a mirror-one [song] of yours?" Then I said, "Sure what do you want to sing?" "Which one do you have?" I started going through everything. I said, "...How about this one of Basil Valdez, called 'Hari?' He said, "I don't know the lyrics of the song." I said, "No, you step out there and I'll go behind the curtains and I'll cheat it out to you-and you'll sing it." And that's what happened. Then he called me out on stage. "Ladies and gentlemen, I couldn't have done this song if not for Gary Valenciano." This was the first time we ever stood together on stage.

You should write your own book.

I'm really tempted to do that because the stories that you read in this book [shows the biographical book "Gary Valenciano" that his dad, Mr. published several months ago to many interviewers. People don't know what dialogue and gossip can do especially to the young because I was there and I saw it for it.

How did you survive, for instance, diabetes attacks?

I almost didn't. I was in the middle of an interview on [FM radio station] 99.5 (I) when I had a hypoglycemic attack [due to my diabetes]. I went to the restroom on my own. It was a good thing that the interview was recorded in-line, I sat down, and the DJ asked me, "Wow, tarnish you see your career in five years with everything that's happening?" I said, "Five years? Five years .... Five years ... You said five years, right? Ok .... Five years...." Then I said, "Can I go to sleep?" That's a no-no. You don't put a person who's going through hypoglycemia to sleep. They called my sister Gina and asked her, "Is your brother on something, coz he's really acting weird?" Immediately she said, "Is he awake?" "No, he said he wanted to sleep." "Don't make him sleep! Bring him to the ER."

They tried to wake me up. They said I even stood up, went out in the hallway, talked to different people, came inside and went back to sleep. Next thing I remembered was seeing lights in the emergency room. My doctor said maybe the incident happened because I was having a lot of stress.

Was that the same thing that happened in Pasadena [California]?

What happened in Pasadena was another one. I was even scared to go to sleep because we were so jagged. I took insulin and I was supposed to eat after that, but I didn't. Instead, I went to sleep. I was supposed to learn my songs for the next show. But next thing I knew, paramedics, with 911 were talking to me. Those questions at the lobby of the hotel.

It was after that incident when I asked for the pump that I have now. It's attached to my body 24 hours. It pumps insulin to me freely every hour. I still it how much to pump. Like now (gets a piece of grape from his plate), this is approximately one gram of carbohydrates. I would tell it to my machine and it would calculate and give me insulin that would balance the amount of carbohydrates that I took. Two hours later when I check my sugar, more often than not, it is where it is supposed to be.

You do that everyday? You don't forget?

No, I don't. As a matter of fact if I do forget, it does not. It will remain when I'm close to running out of insulin. Then I change the whole contraption. It's just a patch that I put in my belly.

What do you attribute your success to?

A lot of things—one is the timing of how Idiazin and I came into the picture. It wasn't like six or seven new artists coming in...but not long ratings. Now, my determinedly, it's harder to get noticed now even if you have record companies to support you. We had a lot of shows but then but we had no such thing as GMA artist or MYS-CM4 artist. You could go to any show ... I think at this point, it's time that I give back to the industry the encouraging love I've received through the years. I'm talking about getting involved in making music for others, going into not just talent management but also artist development.

What was the lowest point in your career?

Sometime in 1997 or 1999, I was offered, guaranteed, that my name would be a big part of the Christian family home in the US. But I wasn't prepared for it ... I remember in an interview with Rito Aquino, she said, "Gary how are you feel now that [in order to not to really-soaring and yours is, well, there, but it's not really there." I didn't realize that was the impression of people. In the end she said, "You know what, they'll think I believe that you really have a chance or being a good artist even if you know it might not seem that way."

I went up to her and said, "Rito, I don't think I've ever been interviewed that way. You took the courage to ask me things that nobody else would probably ask." She answered, "Sir, Gary what I'm saying is that I know people love your music, it would be good to see more of you...."

Then I came out with an album called "Innocence," which actually didn't sell much. So I was like, "What's going on?"

How is the first low?

It wasn't the first low but it was certainly lower than my other seasons.

What happened to that [Project] you mentioned?

I recorded a Christian album in the States in 1995. Higher problems yung record company.

Why did you say you didn't prepare?

You just don't sing, you have to live it, and I wasn't living it. Some people said I was just being too hard on myself but it was a big responsibility, it's so huge that I

TELL M4

Gary V: Still on top of his game

From page H1

you can't reconcile the way you are and the way you spit, you're just going to mix it off a lot of people.

How did you get out of the box podcast?

Like a subterranean journey for me, I didn't know how I was going to get out of it. I just came back into reading what I'm here for, underestimating that more than coming out with a hit song, I'm reaching out to people.

When you said giving back to the industry the pie in on contributing to the United Nations?

Yeah. With United I am like a spokesperson for children. Making people know about certain rights children have.

You are called an ambassador?

Ambassador of goodwill. He started in 1997 or 1998. I wish I could do so much more. The last thing that we did was visit the autonomous region in Mindanao last year.

Do they know you?

Yeah. Ironically, the only Christian there was the mayor. That's another thing that opened my eyes. There are places where Christians and Muslims live together in harmony in a classroom where there were Christian and Muslim students. I asked, "Hindi ba kayo mag-aaway?" "Hindi po." "Ting paglaruin ilinisiyano mo at pagiging Muslim mo hindi ka nagging iyon si Jesus?" "Hindi po." "Ting mga magulang ninyo, mag-aaway ba?" "Hindi po."

And then I went to that place called Dongguan, which is short for Dagang Lahanan, where when the kids hear gumbis, they know what type of gun is being fired. It's a free mentis from an area where the military would always go into because of no-no-no-no comes out alive.

Sagkahukay-ow!

Who told you that? (Laughs) When my sugar is high I get irritable for no reason. I really have a hard time controlling it. Angel and I sometimes argue because she says, "You got to control it." I would answer, "It's like you're telling an epileptic who's having a seizure to control it. Don't tell me to control it!"

You have dietary restrictions?

With this pimple, I just need to know how much carbohydrates I'm eating. It's not rice cakes and pretzels. You give me fruits, I'll survive. Give me a little bread, I'm OK. I also like fruits best.

You've lost your wedding ring done?

Yeah. I was playing basketball at Valle Verde. I remember very well that I put it in a pouch with my wallet. I'm wear in the early '90s. Angel lost hers in Puerto Rico. We went on the 22nd floor of a hotel, she went by the window she pointed to something and ... ring! She even heard it fall on the road.

Back to show biz ... What can you say now that you're up there and Wanlie is not really there?

Some people might say he's not exactly where he should be, but there will never be any other Master Showman. I found out how he's planning to open up for his concert, it's crazy. But that's the Wanlie I know. That's how Martin often will remind people that, "I may be going through some tough times but I'm still here." I talk to him every once in awhile. I remind him, "Hey! Hang in there." And he does the same with me—all the time.

So when pulong mga how story hapo at Martin? Hindi namin pinarung Nina Vilma rivalry.

Some 10 years ago, Martin said, "You know God's someday we're going to look at this and just laugh." That's what we're doing now.

E-mail me at inq@inquirer.com.ph

Shocking revelations about Greta, Nadia

DollyWood

Dolly Anne Carvajal

EIGHTWHILE BOOT FRIENDS GRETCHEN Barretto and Nadia Montenegro's weird war has gone overboard. It was triggered by Nadia's allegedly leaking their scissors friends fabricated stories about Tony Boy Cojuangco throwing keys out of their mansion because of late remarried affair with businessman Bodie Poon.

They reportedly had a face-to-face encounter in Sentosuk last Feb. 22, which only aggravated the situation. Supposedly with them in the room were Bodie, Boy Abunda (Nadia's longtime partner), Kenya Montenegro and a relative of Bodie's.

An insider recounts for us juicy parts of what supposedly transpired that fateful afternoon. It would surely be one of 10 down in historical, epic, homerical proportions.

■ Nadia showed at Greta, "Baby Isa!" Greta fired back, "Mis Asbar Isa! And then she blasted non-stop Nadia's dalliances which stunned Boy mainly. What it involves an actor with foreign blood who's making a comeback.)

■ Boy (who likes gambling) looked liked he lost the biggest gamble of his life. He was advised that maybe Nadia needed professional help for the rules of their kids, that she seemed to have a bipolar disorder. Boy assured us later, "Nadia's just a Greta and Nadia always fights on stage so at Nadia-Boy-Greta on dalo-dalo nyo and sus."

■ My source adds: Greta fears Tonyboy but she's thrilled about Bodie's marriage proposal. Tonyboy also wants to marry Greta but his sentiment hasn't come through. Until that happens, Tonyboy will just put up with Greta's partying and casual flirtations. His only condition is that she's back home when their daughter Dominique wakes up.

Greta and Nadia's war reminds me of what my Mom used to say: "Mag-tiger sa mga lit na tikbalang. Mas mas mga lupit sa mga mang-hilda sa iyo."

Catch-up date!

Cristine Reyes had a spat of the moment Valentine's Day with Derek Ramsay. Following the intimate details to herself. Probably she's just wary of another confrontation scene with Carlene Aguilar (mom of Jessa) here child. It was one of a catch-up date long, "she said. Who'll catch who?

Lea's blog

The ever-gracious Lea Salonga has allowed me to share with you again portions of her latest blog, birthday cheers. Lea! Here's to more years that are well-lived by well-loved you!

'Birthday Reminiscences'

At least 37 at the end of the workweek, I found myself awake until the wee hours of the morning ruminating on whatever lessons I might have some away with in my short life ... and so far, I've learned that:

■ A solo trip can prove more fruitful than the initially intended journey;

■ Long conversations with people who "get it" make time pass so quickly that you almost wish for more;

■ Disappointment will exist, no matter how you try to avoid it;

■ Clean and freshly painted toenails can give you beyond sarcopus [sic] a bad day;

■ Setting an own's impulses can prove right some of the time;

■ You don't always get what you want, but pray that you always get what you need;

■ There is beauty in unexpected places;

■ There is such a thing as "enough";

■ It would have been more prudent to wait, after all;

■ There will be a gift to see be wasted despite absolutely nothing;

■ Most of the time, there's nothing on television;

■ Hitching someone else's business can be counter-productive ... I mean, we have our own business to worry[illegible];

■ In a million [sic] of 7, 107 islands, if we each flower one part of the island, we can have the fairest.

E-mail: roaringlola@yahoogroups.com.

AT THE CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1	1 JUMPER	2 VANTAGE POINT	3 UNTRACEABLE	4 MY BEST FRIEND'S GIRLFRIEND
GLORIETTA 4	1 MY BEST FRIEND'S GIRLFRIEND	2 UNTRACEABLE	3 JUMPER	
	4 27 DRESSES	5 THE ASSASSINATION OF JESSE JAMES	6 VANTAGE POINT	7 THE ASSASSINATION OF JESSE JAMES
GREENBELT 1	1 THE ASSASSINATION OF JESSE JAMES	2 VANTAGE POINT		
GREENBELT 2	1 JUMPER	2 VANTAGE POINT		
	3 JUMPER	4 UNTRACEABLE	5 THE ASSASSINATION OF JESSE JAMES	
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TRINOMA	1 MY BEST FRIEND'S GIRLFRIEND	2 VANTAGE POINT	3 THE ASSASSINATION OF JESSE JAMES	4 UNTRACEABLE
	5 P.S. / 27 DRESSES	6 SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES	7 JUMPER	

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